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Seventy-first session

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Monday, 19 September 2016, 9.30 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

High-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants

Agenda items 13 and 117 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Co-Chair Lykketoft: Before we begin the list of speakers, I would like to turn to some organizational matters pertaining to the conduct of the plenary meeting. In accordance with resolution 70/290, of 30 June 2016, the list of speakers was establishsed on the basis that statements would be limited to 4 minutes. To assist speakers in managing their time, a light system has been installed at the speaker's rostrum. May I appeal to all speakers for their cooperation in observing the time limit as they make their statements, so that all those inscribed can be heard in a timely manner.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Andrej Kiska, President of the Slovak Republic.

President Kiska: I am thankful to have this opportunity to speak first in the Hall. The migration crisis is one of the worst crises to occur since the Second World War. Millions of people are leaving their countries because of war, fear or a lack of food. I would like to make three points.

First, we should not speak in numbers, but about real human problems with regard to children, mothers, fathers and families. We should not talk of millions, but about individual cases of those who are running away from the threat of death. I had a chance to meet refugees from Iraq in our country. When I spoke with them, they told me that they had had three hours to leave and if they had not left, they would have died. That is how we should be thinking — about the real lives and stories of people.

To do that — and this is my second point — we must think about how to work efficiently. Working efficiently means putting our best tools, organizations and people together. For that reason Slovakia welcomes the new agreement between the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration. In addition, my country, which now holds the presidency of the Council of the European Union, advocates a sustainable migration and asylum policy.

Lastly, sometimes we forget that our countries are successful. At times we forget that we therefore have a moral duty. Not only the moral duty of successful people to think about how to help others, but also the moral duty of modern, successful countries to reflect on how to help people in need and how to share their wealth.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

President Buhari: It is a great honour to address the General Assembly and join in the efforts to find a

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solution to the growing concerns about large movements of migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons across the world. It is not a mere coincidence that such movements are occurring around the world, given the ongoing crises and economic, social and political upheavals with serious consequences. We all know that migration is not a crime, especially when persons move across international boundaries to seek refuge from danger to life or personal liberty or from risk of imprisonment. Human movement is a necessary expression of the fundamental right to the freedoms of safety and self-actualization, and taking refuge is a legitimate right recognized by international humanitarian law.

The world is indeed in a dilemma. Nations are required under international humanitarian law to ensure the free movement of persons, particularly those escaping from imminent danger to their lives, by guaranteeing their safety, security and dignity. That responsibility comes at huge financial cost and with serious implications for the national peace and security of nations in fragile political and economic condition. It is equally unfortunate that nations that are capable and willing to absorb large numbers of refugees and migrants are, with few exceptions, such as Jordan, Lebanon and Germany, exercising restraint in the light of the threats posed by terrorists and violent extremist groups. That is particularly important, as such nations also have the corresponding obligation to protect their own territorial integrity and safeguard the well-being of their own citizens.

The cause concerning refugees and migrants in the case of Nigeria would be incomplete without reference to our internally displaced persons — the victims of Boko Haram's terrible atrocities. The Boko Haram insurgency has caused a huge refugee problem, amounting to an estimated 600,000 persons for Nigeria's neighbouring nations. In Nigeria, over 2 million internally displaced persons from the north-east live in various camps across the country. In addressing that challenge, Nigeria, in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, recently hosted a regional dialogue on the displacement of persons, within the framework of a regional protection dialogue in the Lake Chad basin. Let me also state that we have diligently implemented several people-oriented programmes, such as the Protection Intervention Committee for the rehabilitation of the north-east, the Victim Support Fund, the Safe Schools initiative and the North-East Development Commission, currently under legislative process, so as to meet the humanitarian needs of internally displaced persons. We are making a concerted effort to meet our citizens' immediate humanitarian needs by reducing their risk and vulnerability and increasing their resilience through vocational training and skills-acquisition programmes.

Nigeria has also demonstrated appreciable concern with regard to issues of global human mobility by putting in place a number of instruments for control purposes, which include a national migration policy, a labour migration policy, laws on trafficking in persons and Nigerian immigration and national drug law enforcement agencies. I hope that the threat posed by Boko Haram and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham will be taken very seriously.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Gjorge Ivanov, President of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

President Ivanov (*spoke in Macedonian; English text provided by the delegation*): We are living in the twenty-first century, in a time of hope and fear. On one hand, we have hopes for a better life, education, economic development and the protection of the lives of citizens and their property. On the other hand, there is a fear of the consequences of regional conflicts and crises. Movements of migrants and refugees have been triggered both by the pursuit of happiness and by the flight from fear. Twenty million illegal migrants and refugees now find themselves near the external borders of Europe and are being encouraged to use certain corridors in order to reach Europe. We need a common approach to handling the migration crisis and reducing the security risks by making a clear distinction between the legal, humanitarian, political, economic and social aspects and the security aspects of the crisis.

This new era of a cruel twenty-first century requires new leadership and the establishment of new institutions that would then be able to manage crises and risks. The threat of illegal migration is a perfect tool for exercising non-military pressure in the management of crises and conflicts. It is done by exporting migrants and directing them on a path towards their final destination. That has brought about serious tensions among European countries. The challenges of security in the European Union (EU) increasingly depend on leadership, political stability and crisis management

by the Governments of third countries that are on the main entrance and exit corridors. However, those third countries are situated in a geographic position that enables them to control the gates of the corridors. The European Union needs stable and secure third countries that are capable of protecting those corridors.

The Republic of Macedonia's approach to managing the migration crisis is a proactive and preventive one.

We were the first country in Europe to declare a state of crisis and to deploy army troops at the borders, including establishing a joint military-civilian headquarters so as to strengthen border security protection and to channel the movement of migrants without allowing them to enter cities and have contact with radicalized persons or returnees from conflict zones in the process. One might compare the migrant flow to a flood. The crisis management system must therefore be activated and army troops deployed so as to support civilian services in their efforts to handle the flood. The crisis management system must also develop contingency plans and make use of a strategy for eliminating the consequences of the flood. It should involve defensive measures such as so-called dams at external borders, a cleaning process with a hotspot approach and the securing of channels and the control of the refugee flows at the entrance and exit corridors and the routes used by refugees, migrants and foreign terrorist fighters.

We have assumed the responsibility of being the gatekeepers of Europe. The deployment of army troops in support of police forces protecting the border has resulted in an interruption of the illegal migration movement through the so-called Balkan corridor. We must therefore support the revision of legislation concerning the participation of the army in the protection of borders and national security and in countering terrorism. With regard to the assistance requested in relation to the security aspect of the crisis, several partner countries have responded by seconding police officers and providing border protection equipment and financial assistance, namely, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria and Poland. Currently, Macedonia hosts 110 foreign police officers who are assisting us in protecting our border.

The Republic of Macedonia has been left without access to EU databases for the input and comparison of data on migrants and foreign terrorist fighters. There is also a lack of cooperation among intelligence services. All of that happens amid negative media perception surrounding the implementation of the European Union's decisions. Despite the internal political crisis, Macedonia has shown that it has stable institutions for managing the migrant crisis and reducing security risks. In that connection, I wish to convey a message to the European Union. Macedonia needs assistance in order to help the European Union. External borders cannot be protected unless the corridors in countries outside of the EU are secured. Macedonia will act to protect its national security. Any solution that involves housing migrants and creating refugee camps in non-EU member countries along the corridor will not be sustainable, and can therefore not be allowed. We do not have the capacity or resources to address the expected volume of migrants, which could lead to instability in our State.

Courage is expensive and rare in Europe today. Macedonia has shown that it has the courage to face the ongoing threats under the conditions of the ongoing political crisis. The other challenge that we need to address is diversity in major cities. Tolerance for diversity must be replaced by respect for diversity.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, President of the Republic of the Niger.

Mr. Issoufou (*spoke in French*): It is an honour for the Niger to take part in today's high-level meeting to discuss the management of massive movements of refugees and migrants. The fundamental aim is to bring countries together around a more humane and better-coordinated approach. Several meetings were held last year, and this year, on this issue of concern to us all, inlcuding the Valletta Summit on Migration, held in Malta on 11 and 12 November 2015; the high-level meeting of the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris from 30 November to 12 December 2015; the first World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul on 23 and 24 May 2016; and today's meeting.

The Niger stressed the need to address the root causes of the massive movements of refugees and migrants at all of those meetings. The main causes are poverty, inequality, insecurity, lack of democracy and the pernicious effects of climate change. The international community must therefore address such root causes, combat the trafficking in migrants, encourage regulated

migration, protect migrants and, if necessary, ensure their return, readmission and reintegration into their countries of origin in full respect for human rights. That is why I welcome the proposal of the Secretary-General on the development of two global conventions — one on shared responsibility for refugees and migrants and the other on safe, coordinated and regulated migration.

The Niger is among the countries in which such massive movements of refugees and migrants have occurred. The Niger is suffering the consequences of the Libyan and Malian crises and the terrorism of Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin. Because of such crises, the Niger has had to receive thousands of Malian and Nigerian refugees, as well as the Niger refugees returning from Libya. It also has to deal with the internal displacement of people in the Lake Chad region. The Niger is also a transit country for migrants heading towards Europe. Approximately 100,000 migrants passed through the Niger in 2015. The Niger is now suffering the effects of climate change, with extreme flooding and drought, making hundreds of thousands of our citizens vulnerable every year.

In the light of all of those challenges, the Niger calls for a consistent response from the international community. In addition, we also call for a speedy resolution of the Libyan crisis. That of course requires the mobilization and reconciliation of all Libyans as part of an inclusive Government of national unity. The Niger also calls for the stabilization of the situation in Mali. In order to achieve that, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali must be strengthened, because the situation in that country is not a traditional peacekeeping situation. The Niger commends the action taken by the Multinational Joint Task Force to combat Boko Haram and invites the international community to support the countries of the Lake Chad basin as they face an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. With regard to migration issues, the Niger proposed a plan of action at the Europe-Africa Summit in Valletta. The funding for that plan of action would allow the Niger to assist in ending the tragic migrant situation throughout the Sahara.

The issue of the massive movements of refugees and migrants requires substantive political, economic and social responses. That would entail a shift in political and economic governance, not only within each of our respective countries but also globally. I hope that the international community will design and implement solutions that will enable us to build a more just and humane world.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa

President Zuma: I would like to extend South Africa's appreciation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for convening this timely meeting to address the large movements of refugees and migrants. South Africa welcomes the adoption of the outcome document (resolution 71/1) by Member States this morning.

We must alleviate the plight of refugees and migrants everywhere and pave the way for equitable burden-sharing among States. However, the movement of people across international boundaries is not a new phenomenon. As we address this issue, South Africa wishes to caution Member States not to forget that the plight of forcibly displaced persons should be treated with equal concern, whether they form part of large or small movements of people.

South Africa recognizes that, in order to adequately address that challenge, we must address its root causes and understand that underdevelopment is a key driver of the displacement of people that can in turn lead to armed conflict. A concerted global effort to address the questions of underdevelopment and armed conflict should therefore be a central focus for all Member States. Sub-Saharan Africa has hosted, and continues to host, a vast number of forcibly displaced persons, with South Africa being the largest single recipient of asylum-seekers. We provide shelter and support to forcibly displaced persons, in line with the fundamental rights set out in our Constitution.

We welcome the global action being taken to alleviate the pressures resulting from the movement of displaced persons anywhere else. But it is also important not to glide over the causes, which vary. Before the problems in Libya arose, North Africa was at peace with itself. It was the manner in which we handled the Libyan question that has given rise to refugees coming from that country and crossing to Europe and elsewhere.

I think that tells us that whenever we take action where there are full-fledged or emerging problems, we must think very carefully. We must look at what could be the consequences of such actions, because the movement of people arises from various causes, some

of which were not at all necessary. In some cases, the actions taken were in the interests of those who were outside of the countries where the problems began. Consequently, in considering the issue, we must also look at other very fresh actions that have resulted in creating insecurity in other areas.

We look forward to continued engagement on this urgent matter and to finding real solutions. We rededicate ourselves to being a partner for positive change in that regard.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Borut Pahor, President of the Republic of Slovenia.

President Pahor: Migration has been a constant feature of human history. It is a part of global progress and development, and migrants have been important drivers of economic, social, cultural and human evolution. When talking about the benefits of migration, what we have in mind is safe, orderly and regular migration. Our objective today is to avoid irregular migration and firmly combat the criminal networks that take advantage of it.

We must also bolster efforts to prevent false expectations, disinformation and distorted images of the life that awaits migrants and refugees outside their homelands. In fact, we should strengthen our cooperation in all aspects of migration management, including the return and reintegration of irregular migrants to their countries of origin.

The most effective way to address the crisis is to find a viable solution that enables us to tackle its root causes and push factors. That can be done only through the joint efforts of the entire international community, in the spirit of shared responsibility and solidarity, open dialogue and cooperation. The current global crisis is a stark reminder for all us that we need to accelerate our efforts and work together.

The European Union faces immense migration pressure on both its maritime and its land borders. My country, Slovenia, as a transit country, has also faced an unprecedented flow of migrants and refugees fleeing conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa. From mid-October 2015 to date, nearly half a million people have entered our country — a number equivalent to about a quarter of the entire population of Slovenia. We have therefore experienced at first hand how important it is to collaborate closely with partners within and outside the European Union and with international organizations. Slovenia actively participates in the European Union reallocation and resettlement scheme and has over the past two years also significantly increased its humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons and refugees.

Let me conclude my remarks by saying that the politics of peace and dialogue must prevail, and we must ensure cooperation on the basis of international law and principles. The United Nations needs to play a more prominent role in the process. To that end, we should perhaps also think of correcting the existing United Nations architecture in order to make it more efficient in conflict prevention and the resolution of disputes.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland.

President Duda (*spoke in Polish; interpretation provided by the delegation*): A growing number of States in various parts of the world are today confronting unprecedented migration. That phenomenon concerns not only Europe, Africa and the Middle East, but also every region and continent. We are all struggling now to deal with large movements of people, which are a consequence not only of armed conflicts, aggression and violence, but also of economic crises and natural disasters.

I have pondered the solution to the problem of mass migration and have come to the conclusion that the element that is often missing in the debate is differentiating between economic migration and war refugees. Indeed, those different phenomena require entirely different responses. If we merge the tragedy of refugees with the needs of economic migrants, we will not be able to provide effective assistance to either of those groups, because their aspirations are entirely different. The cause of economic migration is generally the fact that people are striving to improve their financial situation and gain access to entitlements to social benefits, whereas the source of war and political refugee flows is always the desire to save one's life or to protect one's health.

The scale of migratory flows in the world today is immense. According to estimates in my country, Poland, more than 1 million economic migrants, mainly from the East, have become permanent residents. In turn, based on various estimates, 1 to 2 million citizens have left Poland to work in other European Union countries.

Large-scale social migration forced by politicians represents a very irresponsible course of action. There are many areas in which social migration can engender social tensions, prejudice, false accusations about the alleged stealing of jobs or intentions to abuse the social system of the receiving State. Unfortunately, there are some politicians who take advantage of such attitudes. They try to gain popularity by dwelling on unfair generalizations. It should be incumbent on politicians to prevent such harmful stereotypes from emerging and destroying the social order. I do realize that there are also people whose objective is not to improve their situation in life through work, but to abuse social rights. Obviously, State authorities are obliged to curb such practices, especially since the latter tend to reinforce the conviction among the public that all economic migrants are dishonest.

As far as war refugees are concerned, I would like to underscore two tasks ahead of us.

First, the international community must eliminate the real root causes behind refugee flows and restore everyone's right to live in his or her own home country. We shall never overcome the tragedy of refugees as long as we do not put an end to the conflicts that arise, often from imperial ambitions, ethnic hatred or economic interest. There are no wars without reasons, hence there are no wars that could not be put an end to.

Secondly, it is our duty to cooperate in order to permanently eliminate the crimes committed by individuals who inhumanely prey on the tragedy of refugees. I am referring to the operations of criminal groups that collect money under the pretext of protecting, transporting or smuggling refugees, as well as the phenomena of money laundering through banks of the civilized world and deal-making with criminals and murderers. Putting an end to such practices will not solve the problem entirely, but will certainly reduce the tragedy of people who suffer two-fold — first as a result of war and then because of actions perpetrated by those who prey on their misfortune.

We cannot turn a blind eye to the bloodstained money that circulates around the world. In each of those aspects, the situation today demands effective solutions. The Republic of Poland is ready to actively participate in such endeavours.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Baron Divavesi Waqa, President of the Republic of Nauru.

President Waqa: Nauru welcomes the adoption of resolution 71/1, aimed at addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. The outpouring of support that we have heard today concerning the plight of refugees and migrants should be applauded. But it must not be forgotten that the humanitarian crisis we face today is largely the result of deliberate policy choices made in the realms of economics, security and the environment. The material gains of globalization and technological advancement have not been shared equitably, and large-scale migration has been one of the predictable results.

The crisis has human origins, which should be deeply troubling to all leaders entrusted with protecting the lives and well-being of their people. However, that also means that we have the power to solve the problem if we work together. In that regard, I will take this opportunity to share with the Assembly Nauru's efforts to address this global crisis through the provision of processing services and temporary settlement for asylum-seekers.

My country is a typical source country, transit country or destination that can offer permanent settlement to refugees or migrants. We are a small island in the middle of the Pacific, an isolated oasis far from strife and conflict. In 2001 and again in 2012, we were invited to assist in managing migration in our region in the face of the thousands of deaths at sea of men, women and children. Recognizing the humanitarian imperative of taking action, we offered our country as a place where asylum-seekers could be hosted and put into a refugee-processing system. This remote processing model is able to take away the benefit being offered by people smugglers, reduce or eliminate death at sea, ensure that States can control their borders, and, at the same time, ensure that people in need are granted protection.

The implementation of this model is not without its issues, so it is important that I share with you Nauru's first-hand experience — both our achievements and challenges. We have established a robust, fair and impartial refugee determination system, which means that remote processing does not prevent people from seeking protection; rather, it ensures that people seeking protection are able to have their claims properly processed in a timely way. We seek to ensure all the rights of asylum-seekers and to accord the rights established in the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees

to those who are found to be refugees, including the issuance of 1951 Convention travel documents.

We encourage States to recognize such documents, which conform to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and International Civil Aviation Organization specifications. We are Convention signatories, as well as an active member of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. Our system for determining asylum claims complies with UNHCR guidelines.

Nauru is well placed to provide surge capacity for migrant flows and to be a place of processing and transition on the path to viable permanent outcomes. However, finding durable settlement solutions for our refugees is the missing component. In a comprehensive strategy, an outflow of refugees to permanent settlement countries is the essential last step of the model. I invite members to partner with us in providing permanent homes for the 924 refugee men, women and children currently in Nauru.

My Government is committed to continuing our contribution towards a safe, humane and dignified strategy for international and regional cooperation in addressing this humanitarian emergency.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Republic of Portugal.

President Rebelo de Sousa: The management of migratory flows is one of the greatest challenges we have to face at the United Nations today. It is essential to place people at the centre of our decisions, as was promised several years ago at the High-level Dialogue of the General Assembly on migration and development (A/68/PV.25). But how do we make the transition from words to the practice of dignity? We need concrete and feasible responses based on cooperation among countries, States, international organizations and civil society, and on respect for human rights, but mostly we must integrate the policies of migration, humanitarian assistance and development.

A lot is being said about the reception of refugees and migrants, but not so much about their full integration and the causes of what is happening everywhere and what led to the causes. The cooperation between nations and civil society must be much more effective in stabilizing political situations, solving conflicts, and stimulating investment, professional skill and job creation in countries facing important economic and social challenges. We have been working on such a pre-emptive strategy.

Concerning integration, Portugal promotes granting the children of all migrants access to education and health-care systems, regardless of whether they have regular or irregular legal status. We have reinforced the protection of undocumented children. Their information is confidential and cannot be shared with migration authorities. That is a way of helping them have full access to both health care and learning.

But when one speaks of managing the refugee crisis, one needs to look at the situation of those young people. They need to continue their studies, including university and polytechnical school studies. Such access is the reason for the establishment of the so-called Global Platform for Syrian Students, led by the former President of the Republic of Portugal, Mr. Jorge Sampaio. We have already integrated many young Syrian students into universities in 10 countries. We even support the idea of creating a rapid-response mechanism for higher education in emergencies.

With regard to Europe's involvement, we have accepted our duties. We have doubled the number of people whom we are receiving in our country for reasons of solidarity and have received thousands of people from everywhere through Turkey, Greece, Italy and Egypt, the latter in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. We have increased our financial contributions to every organization and humanitarian agency active in this field.

Today we saw a very important step — the adoption of resolution 71/1, entitled "New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants". That is just a step. It is not the end of the road. It is a new beginning in one of the most complex challenges of our time, but it is also a challenge to our political, social and economic gains and to the principle of human dignity. That is the reason we are here.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal.

President Sall (*spoke in French*): The issue that brings us together today is of vital importance. It is estimated that there are more than 65 million

internally displaced persons, refugees or migrants. The phenomenon of migration is certainly not new, but today it has been exacerbated by the effects of war and other sources of instability, which are related to insecurity and the severity of climatic conditions in some parts of the globe. It is not easy to deal with that issue. Beyond conventional wisdom, only a calm, coordinated and comprehensive approach can resolve such a complex problem.

Senegal is hosting a number of African and non-African communities. It also has a large diaspora around the world. We are therefore particularly sensitive to the issue of how migrants are treated by host countries. All migrants, all persons who are refugees, requires treatment that respects their dignity and fundamental human rights, regardless of where they come from.

Senegal recognizes and commends the efforts of all those countries that are hosting refugees. The opening of their doors and the granting of asylum to fellow human beings who have been forced to leave their countries in order to save their lives is a great sign of the humanity of those countries. At the same time, we must also ensure that the situation being faced by migrants who have been living in their host countries for many years is not called into question by the temporary situation of refugees. In many cases, migrants are good people who work hard to make a living and thereby contribute to the economic and social development of their host country. Many of them have also established homes where they live with their families; therefore, the same human values underpinning the welcome for refugees mean that we must also respect migrants' rights.

The two requirements are not mutually exclusive. Rather than a systematic policy of returning migrants, Senegal believes that the situation of migrants should be stabilized, which should be done through the appropriate regularization of their status. It is also a priority to work towards lasting solutions to the clandestine flow of migrants. That requires a strong and ongoing battle against criminal networks promoting clandestine migration, including through the enhanced means that have been authorized under Security Council resolution 2240 (2015), of 9 October 2015.

The partnership between Europe and Africa in that context — and Senegal is a participant in that effort — has to that end come up with very successful outcomes. We seek to stabilize the political and institutional situation in transit countries, because when a State is fragile or non-existent, those networks prosper and benefit from the chaos of an absent State authority. It is up to other States to implement appropriate policies that can give young people reasons to hope, which involve education and training and the provision of jobs and revenue-generating activities. By responding to the problems of youth and revitalizing those zones from which potential migrants come and facilitating projects to provide basic social services, we will be able to deal effectively with the deep roots of the migration phenomenon.

In conclusion, I must express Senegal's concern at the possibility that detention centres could be established in African countries. That question merits serious consideration in the light of the rules that govern the rights of persons and their assets in integrated areas, such as in the Economic Community of West African States.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Majesty King Don Felipe VI of the Kingdom of Spain.

King Felipe VI (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to express the appreciation of the Kingdom of Spain at seeing this high-level meeting convened on the major movements of migrant flows. Great movements of people are a sign of our times. A good part of humankind finds itself forced to displace itself: 75 million refugees and internally displaced persons are fleeing conflicts, terrorism or persecution. Specifically, many of those people are knocking on the doors of Europe. Our responsibility is to welcome them, subject to our capacity, so that they can lead a dignified life. They have been expelled by force from their homes, and they need to know that they can count on our support to meet their needs and that they can exercise and, above all, realize their right to return to their homeland.

However, that return necessarily means that conflicts must come to an end, terrorism must be defeated, and inclusive and democratic societies must be established where the fundamental rights to life and liberty are respected. As a non-permanent member of the Security Council and as a committed member of the international community, Spain will continue working to ensure that this is the case. This high-level meeting should not be understood as an isolated event. Today, we are implementing a process that will require

the ongoing efforts of everyone for a very long period of time. So I now declare the full preparedness of the Kingdom of Spain to work as hard as we can to prepare and negotiate the two global conventions on migrants and refugees that need to be adopted for 2018.

Spain hopes that it can be a relevant actor in a matter of enormous ethical and humanitarian importance. Spain, given its historical role as a geographic crossroads, is very well aware of the situation. The societies of today and tomorrow are, and will be, diverse from an ethnic, cultural and religious point of view. That unavoidable fact must also be made compatible with the respect for the values that should be observed in the host countries. Therefore, the migratory flows, if they are correctly managed, should have a clearly positive effect on the host societies. In the matter of the management of such huge movements of people, Spain has experience that has delivered good results. It is based on the guarantee of the protection of people and an intense and sustained effort to cooperate with the countries where the migrants come from, as well as the transit countries.

Spain's attitude has always been inspired by its willingness to lessen this human drama of major scale. We have to fight in a coordinated manner against human traffickers and human trafficking. We must provide international protection to those who justly request asylum, and we need to offer our support and show our solidarity and assistance to the transit and host countries for refugees. We must promote the integration of refugees and the legal means for emigration. That shared responsibility is the fundamental pillar that should be at the core of the solution that affects us all and that nobody can solve individually.

I conclude by thanking the Secretary-General for convening this meeting, which represents a good response to the General Assembly's decision to concentrate international efforts on great migration flows. We are sure that the results of this meeting will mark a crucial turning point on this matter of such vital transcendence, whose moral and political implications require a special demonstration of determination, generosity and perseverance.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Paraguay.

Mr. Loizaga Lezcano (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Today we are meeting while faced with the troubling reality of the greatest refugee crisis since the Second World War. For the Republic of Paraguay, the current refugee crisis is, above all, a humanitarian and political crisis, in which human beings are struggling to survive, escaping from terrorist activities, leaving their homes and trying to escape from armed conflicts, violence, persecution and blind intolerance. These people, who board unseaworthy vessels, often place themselves at great risk. They include women, children and the elderly, and, regardless of their race, religion or origin, deserve the protection of the States Members of the United Nations.

We call for humanitarian assistance for these people, whose rights are fully protected by the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951. We reiterate the conviction that if the deep-rooted causes of the problem are not dealt with by the countries affected, the crisis will continue and even risk worsening. Similarly, the refugee crisis has been intensified by the massive migration phenomena that are occurring in various parts of the world, including thousands of Latin Americans and unaccompanied children. We reiterate that these are people who are seeking new opportunities in whatever country they can find them, opportunities to which they are entitled under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They have equality under the law, irrespective of who they are, and we emphasize that the protection of anyone's human rights, including migrants' rights, can never be denied on the grounds of their status as migrants.

Like all countries in the Americas, the Republic of Paraguay has welcomed a large number of migrants from the most diverse parts of the world throughout its long history. A few days ago in Paraguay, we celebrated the eightieth anniversary of the first Japanese migration. That migration has contributed positively and significantly to the development of the country. Today, we have communities that have integrated into our society, having adopted Paraguayan culture and enriched it with their traditions and customs from their countries of origin, and they form an integral part of the cultural and socioeconomic life of our country. Thousands of Paraguayan migrants who, for various reasons, have moved to a number of countries in the world have contributed through their work and sacrifices to the economic growth and cultural diversity in their adoptive countries.

My country's experience teaches us that the movement of persons is most plural and diverse when individuals are included in national plans and

programmes. We therefore advocate the promotion of safe, organized and regular migration, and we are among the States that implement migration policies that ensure adequate conditions for transit and safe and dignified shelter, including the means for regularizing the status of migrants. Undoubtedly, regularizing the status of migrants will contribute to the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We are convinced that only through an in-depth understanding of the migration process can we face the problem with fewer fears and prejudices. We vigorously oppose all forms of discrimination, racism, xenophobia and any other kind of intolerance with regard to refugees and migrants. We believe that establishing a space for dialogue within the Organization for debating the challenges of international migration, as illustrated by the adoption this morning of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), is a major step forward.

The entire international community must assume that joint responsibility and develop a proper response, while always respecting the human rights of migrants.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The General Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Antoni Martí Petit, Prime Minister of the Principality of Andorra.

Mr. Martí Petit (Andorra) (*spoke in Spanish*): The major displacement of refugees and migrants represents one of the major challenges facing us today. We have witnessed it in its various tragic iterations in recent years along the borders of Europe because of the conflict in Syria. But this is not a new phenomenon. The history of humankind is full of great migrations.

That same history show us that, in general, migrations represent a positive phenomenon that has contributed to improving both the host countries and the countries of origin. Andorra has had its own experience in that area. During the nineteenth century, many Andorrans found in migration a solution to the poverty in which they were living in Andorra, a mountainous country based on a subsistence economy.

In the twentieth century, especially after the Second World War, that tendency was reversed, and Andorra became a host society for thousands of migrants originating mainly from other European countries. Without the influx of those people, the large economic growth of Andorra over the past 70 years would not have been possible. At the same time, Andorra is proud of having given opportunities for advancement to so many families.

Beyond the economic incentives for promoting emigration, Andorra has also historically welcomed political or war refugees with open arms. During the Spanish Civil War, Andorra gave refuge to both sides of the conflict, and during the Second World War our country provided a route of escape for Jewish families fleeing the Nazi regime and for Allied pilots from occupied France. True to our tradition of hospitality, the Government of Andorra is currently working on introducing legislation to regularize situations of provisional asylum. That detail seems important to me, because despite their similarities, the situation of refugees and that of migrants differ in significant ways. The situation of the migrant is one in which he or she is seeking a better future by coming to a country, integrating into a new community and exercising his or her rights and responsibilities as a new citizen.

The situation of refugees is different and, in the majority of cases, much more desperate. In the case of refugees, we, as the international community, have the duty not only to offer asylum and protect their human rights, but also to make it possible for those people — who are fleeing war, intolerance and persecution — to return one day to live in their countries of origin as full citizens.

While the two situations are different, they also have points in common. In both cases, the international community — and every country that is a part of it — must ensure the rights and dignity of displaced persons. We must prevent their desperation and state of need from becoming exploited, as is currently happening through the actions of criminal organizations that traffic in human beings.

Once again, all of these questions must be addressed from a perspective that can be nothing other than global. We must have an international regulation that ensures the rights of displaced persons and manages migration flows. It must be a regulation that allows migratory movements to continue to have a positive impact on our global society, as has always been the case throughout the history of humankind.

Today, here in New York, we have taken a small step forward. However, the most important step is yet to be taken, that is, to move from words to deeds.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Petro Poroshenko, President of Ukraine.

President Poroshenko: First, let me commend this extremely important and timely endeavour. Humankind is being tested by unprecedented waves of refugees and the migrant crisis. Approximately 250 million people have been driven by way of various fates to flee their homes. But they are united by the same hope, namely, to live in security and with dignity. The global crisis requires our shared responsibility and concerted effort. Today I would like to express my strong solidarity with those who have been forced to abandon their homes against their will.

Foreign aggression and State-sponsored terrorism are the enemies of humankind in many parts of the world. Unfortunately, my country has also been affected by that problem. Russian armed aggression has forced almost 1.8 million Ukrainians to seek a new home within the country, placing Ukraine among the top 10 countries experiencing internal displacement. So far, we have consistently demonstrated our commitment to protect all of them. An appropriate framework was established to, among other things, guarantee their social needs and provide access to health care, education and employment. Our determination has prevented an additional significant influx of refugees into other parts of Europe. Let me thank all of our governmental and humanitarian partners for standing by Ukraine during this challenging time of need. However, we cannot maintain a responsive stance. We need a lasting solution to end the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

The outcome of this high-level meeting could provide hope to millions of people. The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) provides us with an inclusive framework for further cooperation in coordinating our efforts. It rightly addresses the key issue of human mobility, including the need to combat xenophobia, discrimination and human trafficking. Ukraine was one of the first European countries to criminalize human trafficking, back in 1998. Let me also emphasize the appeal for adequate humanitarian financing to bridge the gap in funding humanitarian needs.

We also welcome the fact that the Declaration has established the foundation to address the needs of internally displaced persons. It is our political and moral obligation to protect and support them. It is also time to re-establish the position of Special Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons. However, all of our efforts will be in vain unless the very origins of such displacement are addressed, namely, foreign aggression and the violation of international law.

We have no right to turn a blind eye to Russia's bombardment of civilian facilities in Aleppo, Syria, or in Donbas, Ukraine. That concerns not only compliance with human rights principles, but also the responsibility of the State that is violating international law and the fundamental freedoms of civilians and forcing them to leave their homes. We need an international mechanism on responsibility as soon as possible, together with a binding international framework to protect the rights of internally displaced persons.

'n conclusion, I would like to urge the international community to redouble its efforts in facilitating the resolution of conflicts based on the norms and principles of international law. That is the only way to shape a sustainable solution to one of the most painful problems facing humankind.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The General Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Enele Sosene Sopoaga, Prime Minister of Tuvalu.

Mr. Sopoaga (Tuvalu): My country, Tuvalu, is very pleased and honoured to contribute to this high-level debate on possible solutions to the issue of large movements of refugees and migrants. I would first like to register Tuvalu's sincere thanks to the Secretary-General for his determination and his comprehensive report entitled "The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet" (A/69/700). The stage has been set for us the leaders here at the United Nations, because the issue has come to light so many times. The plight of people displaced by conflict, disaster or the impact of climate change has frequently dominated media narratives and United Nations debates and formed part of our Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — Agenda 2030.

The realities of the multiple crises involving conflict, violence and disaster have captivated our imagination and generated urgent discourses on possible responses, including for those displaced within countries or beyond borders for temporary or protracted periods. As the United Nations family, we must respond. We must hear the call and respond to the monumental crisis with monumental solidarity and commitment

and the necessary political will. Our response to large movements of people must be grounded in shared values of humanitarian responsibility. Long-term solutions should be found for the sake of the safety and dignity of migrants and refugees, as well as for that of originating and receiving countries and communities.

Whether people are internally displaced or beyond the boundaries of their citizenship, many move to escape armed conflict, human-caused conflict, political conflict, religious persecution, poverty, food insecurity, terrorism or human rights violations and abuses. Some move in search of new economic prospects and opportunities. Others, including in my own country, do so in response to the adverse impacts of climate change or because of the effects of sea-level rise and climate change. The United Nations must hear and come to the rescue of those people and provide assurances of security in relation to livelihood and survival. We must reach out to those people in their time of need. We are grateful to, and very encouraged by, host countries and individuals that have continued to demonstrate leadership and a willingness to accept migrants and refugees. We commend our neighbour, the Republic of Nauru, for offering to contribute in that regard.

There is also a call to recognize that we belong to the same family. As a Tuvaluan elder has said, we are all human beings, made in the image of God. So let us build bridges, not walls or defences. When managed properly, accepting refugees is a win-win solution for everyone. Refugees are famously devoted to education and self-reliance, as we all know. They bring new skills and dynamism into aging workforces. As migrants, however, it is also importance that we show respect for the laws of the countries that receive us, and that we do not impose or transfer new laws or values to host countries.

It is also critical that this dialogue take into account the fact that some people will be forced to move by the adverse effects of climate change, particularly those who live in small island low-lying countries such as my own, Tuvalu, in the Pacific, and those in the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean and other regions especially vulnerable to climate change. We must take them into account, too, and make sure that we provide for the protection of such people, displaced or likely to be displaced by the impact of climate change. That is well recognized in the SDGs, and the challenge is that we take action as soon as possible.

As we know, recent studies suggest that an average of 22.5 million people are displaced every year by the effects of climate change and other climate- or weather-related disasters. That is equivalent to 62,000 people being displaced every day by climate change, particularly sea-level rise. We will be introducing a draft resolution calling for a legal framework to take into account the protection and the rights of such people. Their rights must be protected when they are forced to migrate across country, and their security and survival must be assured under international law and the umbrella of the United Nations family. I am pleased to be able to say that we will be working with other members of the Organization to advance that draft resolution. I will be seeking the support of the members of the international community here.

In conclusion, we also need to take into account the main outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit, just recently concluded in Istanbul, in order to further our progress in dealing with movements of migrants and refugees. With that, Tuvalu also warmly welcomes the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), and I commit my country to working in solidarity with the United Nations to advance it.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: I should remind speakers that we have agreed on a four-minute limit to statements.

I now call on His Excellency Mr. Rimbink Pato, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Immigration of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea.

Mr. Pato (Papua New Guinea): On behalf of my country, I thank the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for today's important high-level meeting, which is a critical step in the right direction. We are grateful to the United Nations for the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted earlier this morning (see A/71/PV.3) as resolution 71/1. I would like to describe the experience of my own country, Papua New Guinea.

We are hosting a total of 1,007 refugees and other migrants from around the world at a regional resettlement facility on Manus Island and in other parts of the country. Of that total, 671 are prima facie refugees, 204 are asylum-seekers and 132 are migrants. The majority of them — 563 of the refugees — have refused resettlement in Papua New Guinea, and third countries are being sought for their placement, while 72 have decided to make Papua New Guinea their home. We are also in the final stages of addressing the asylum-

seekers among the more than 20,000 other people who have sought refuge in Papua New Guinea outside the Manus Island asylum-seeker centre.

The Manus Island processing facility was established based on our country's humanitarian gesture of goodwill and in recognition of our international human rights obligations. The centre has not been without controversy, but it is also a demonstration of the bilateral and regional cooperation that we have maintained with Australia and other partners since 2012, in order to address not only the issue of refugees and migrants but also the despicable acts of people-smuggling and human trafficking for profit conducted by criminals and other syndicates around the world. Papua New Guinea is in the process of closing the facility on Manus Island owing to a ruling by our Supreme Court that the centre is unconstitutional. Its current residents are therefore allowed to move freely around Manus Island and are encouraged to prepare for resettlement in Papua New Guinea. Their human rights are also recognized and respected by Papua New Guineans.

As an island country, Papua New Guinea is also concerned about the security implications of climate change, including rising sea levels, coastal erosion and ocean acidification, which will inevitably lead to a forced mass displacement of peoples and communities. For us, many lives and livelihoods, particularly in the agricultural and fisheries sectors, are dependent upon the health of our environment. However, changing weather patterns and losses in biodiversity may leave many with low yields and thus a need to migrate to other areas in order to assure for themselves sustainable livelihoods, security and a future. Climate refugees are no longer an abstract notion; they are already emerging in my own country in the case of the Carteret Islands.

We must work together in order to effectively combat climate change, and we call on all countries to sign and ratify the Paris Agreement, so as to ensure that it enters into force as soon as possible. It is a measure essential to ensuring that we act in concert in order to deal with the major climate crisis facing our world today. Papua New Guinea will be lodging its instrument of ratification this week.

Today's meeting should rise above mere rhetoric to provide lasting and meaningful pathways and actions for overcoming the challenges of mass movements of refugees and migrants worldwide, which have unfortunately now become a serious global humanitarian crisis and are also threatening global peace and security. We cannot afford to let it spiral out of control. No country is immune to it, and the implications are wide-ranging and far-reaching, not only for those particularly innocent children on the move, but also for transit and destination countries. This is a global problem and it must be acted upon in a comprehensive and concerted manner.

As Papua New Guinea is a resource-challenged country, our national experience in hosting migrants and refugees and providing for their needs is not a simple issue. Shared global responsibility in this area is therefore most important. This is why Papua New Guinea is serious and committed to being part of the global solution to this issue and therefore welcomes and supports the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants adopted today (resolution 71/1).

The key to stemming the tide of migrant and refugee exodus from the countries of origin is to address the fundamental root causes that trigger such movements of people in the world. Any measures taken must put the human rights of migrants at the forefront of all considerations. There also be serious consideration given to holding countries of origin accountable for the exodus of their peoples.

We need to strengthen strategic partnerships within a mutually supportive and global and regional system. We must work together to consolidate the various international standards on migration into a single framework, which would ultimate strengthen international cooperation. I think the work has started this morning with the adoption of the New York Declaration. We must address the smuggling of people and trafficking in humans by combating criminal networks, prosecuting perpetrators and protecting the victims and ensuring their future security.

In conclusion, we need to scale up our activities in the areas of data capacity-building and disaggregated migration data at all levels in order to effectively track down and monitor population movements as well as the criminals who benefit from the smuggling of people and the trafficking in humans. This will help us in showing causes and patterns of migration that can be used to inform migration law, policy and responses in countries of origin, transit and destination.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: I would remind delegations once again that speakers should limit their remarks to four minutes.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

President Mugabe: Over the past year, we have witnessed harrowing images of refugees risking their lives to flee the dire realities in their countries of origin. We have been equally shocked at the hostile reception refugees have often been subjected to. Against this backdrop, we are pleased at the convening of today's important meeting that allows us to explore a collective blueprint for dealing with large movements of refugees and migrants. We are also pleased that the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) highlights the importance of addressing the root causes of large movements of people.

The movement of people from one place to another is not a new phenomenon at all. Migration has been a fact of life from time immemorial. However, it is their magnitude and the highly interconnected nature of our world today that makes these movements an unprecedented phenomenon. While this very interconnectedness has been viewed with apprehension in some quarters, we are convinced that it gives us an opportunity to come together and forge sustainable strategies in a much more effective manner than could have been done in our previously unconnected world. Indeed, how we choose to address the issue of large movements of refugees and migrants will have a significant bearing on the realization of our collective goals as enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This is why today's meeting and the outcomes it has adopted are so crucial.

We have noted that a large number of the refugees that have landed on European shores originated from countries in armed conflict, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria. We are therefore convinced that the return to the ideals of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war and refraining from the use of armed force, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, is critical in addressing the root causes of large movements of refugees.

Apart from natural disasters, large-scale movements are in great measure a result of direct acts of commission and omission by humankind. As a result, more effort must be exerted towards the peaceful settlement of disputes under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. More often than not, Member States have been too willing to resort to force without exhausting peaceful means. Hegemonic military doctrines and adventurism, fuelled by a desire to achieve the narrow national interests of a powerful few, are at the root of the proliferation of the armed conflicts that have spawned so many refugees to date.

Some recent efforts to combat terrorism have tended to trample upon the rights of migrant communities and refugees. While States have a legitimate right to take appropriate measures to protect their citizens from terrorism, there is a great risk of their mimicking the very same terrorist scourge. Should we in the process disregard and wantonly violate their fundamental rights?

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the positive contribution that migrants make to inclusive growth and sustainable development. As we gain traction in the implementation of the Agenda, we should therefore be wary of a rising tendency by some unscrupulous individuals to stoke the fires of xenophobia and promote negative narratives of migrants for political expediency. We have a collective responsibility to change that narrative on migrants and migration in our countries. Many countries owe some of the success in business and scientific prowess to the invaluable contributions of migrants and refugees. We commend those States that have, despite their own limitations, opened their borders to migrant communities.

We in Zimbabwe have hosted many refugees from conflict-affected countries. We call for a balanced focus on the humanitarian plight of migrants and refugees the world over. It is our sincere hope that implementation of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants that we have adopted today will culminate in a comprehensive and sustainable collective response to this shared challenge and promote burden-sharing. We are also encouraged by the adoption of the two annexes that seek to take us towards a comprehensive refugee response framework and a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. As we move towards operationalizing these frameworks, we call for continued adherence to the principles of national ownership and leadership above all else.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed

bin Nawwaf bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Prince Al Saud (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): The crisis of refugees arising from ethnic conflicts and disputes requires that we combine our efforts in order to address that crisis harmoniously and to limit its impact on humankind. Saudi Arabia is dealing with this issue inspired by the teachings of Islam, which call for security, peace and providing assistance to those who are in need.

In demonstration of the humanitarian role assumed by the Kingdom since its founding by King Abdulaziz, the country has worked to lay the foundations of humanitarian assistance, so that Saudi Arabia ranks third among countries globally in terms of humanitarian aid and development assistance. The assistance provided by the Kingdom over the past four decades totals $139 billion. As the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdelaziz Al Saud has maintained this assistance to all countries in need. We established the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre to reflect the commitment of Saudi Arabia to providing assistance at the global level.

Since the eruption of the crisis in Syria, the Kingdom has been the foremost provider of assistance to the Syrian people to alleviate their humanitarian suffering. We host 2.5 million Syrians, treat them as refugees and put them in refugee camps to ensure their safety and dignity. They are allowed full freedom of movement, and the hundreds of thousands of refugees who wished to stay in the Kingdom have been granted permanent residency, work permits and free medical care. A total of 140,000 Syrian students have been hosted and given free schooling. We have also provided care for millions of Syrian refugees in the refugee communities.

In addition, our brethren, Yemeni refugees in Saudi Arabia, are treated as visitors and provided with freedom of movement, the right to work and to bring their families. A total of 285,000 Yemeni students have received a free public education in Saudi Arabia. The value of assistance provided by the Kingdom recently to Yemeni refugees in Djibouti and Somalia totals more than $4.2 billion. We recently provided $500 million in response to the humanitarian and relief needs of the Yemeni people.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes that the first and primary step for cooperation and dealing with those crises is to intensify efforts to resolve disputes under the Charter of the United Nations by using proactive diplomacy in order to end crises and not allow them to spiral out of control. The Kingdom will continue to work tirelessly with international organizations and countries that believe in collective work in order to achieve peace and international security and maintain the goodwill of humankind around the globe.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: I now give the floor to Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar.

Sheikh Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a pleasure for me to thank both Presidents of the General Assembly at its seventieth and seventy-first sessions for their efforts and hard work in preparing this meeting today. We also thank the Secretary-General for his ongoing support and efforts.

This meeting is taking place during a period of increasing conflicts and humanitarian crises in the world, which have led to unprecedented waves of refugees. The images of boats filled with refugees who are fleeing areas of poverty and conflict remains etched in our minds. These images make us weep. We have seen utter disregard for human rights and international law. It is regrettable that women and children, the elderly and the handicapped are also among the refugees. We cannot close our eyes to such massive violations of human rights. We must insist that they receive assistance, in line with the customs of international treaties. The international community today agrees that any effort to find sustainable solutions to the refugee and migrant humanitarian crisis must be based on cooperation to ensure a comprehensive vision of how to address the root causes of these problems so that we can provide a life of dignity for these populations.

We must insist on urgently finding political solutions to these conflicts. We do not take the burden that is placed on the countries that host these migrants and refugees lightly. Therefore, we ask everyone to cooperate in addressing the consequences of these humanitarian crises. We also need to focus on the root causes that lead to xenophobia, which can be very dangerous within the host communities. In that regard, we believe that we must find ways of protecting human rights.

Education is one of the most serious issues we must grapple with, because refugees face a lack of education during their movements. Refugees under 18 years of age are suffering the consequences of being deprived of an

education. We need to have special programmes set up for that category of refugees, under the framework of urgent assistance. There is consensus that the refugee crisis we face today is the result of continuing conflicts.

Qatar has warned against the conflicts in the Arab region and their disastrous impact on peace and international safety and security. These conflicts have also led to major flows of refugees from the region. Nevertheless, the region also hosts 2.2 per cent of refugees from all over the world. Qatar reiterates the need for international cooperation in finding long-term solutions to these problems instead of quick fixes. Any solution must be long-term and in line with the Charter of the United Nations and its provisions on the settlement of conflicts by peaceful means and mediation, which has proven to be extremely efficient. Qatar has direct experience in that regard.

The Arab region is also suffering from decades-long refugee problems. The apparently recent phenomenon of displacement has in fact endured throughout the seven decades of Israel's occupation of Palestine. That practice has been deemed illegal and undermined the peace and security of the Palestinians.

The world needs to concentrate on finding a sustainable and equitable solution, in line with international treaties. The fact that millions of refugees and displaced persons are fleeing Syria today is the inevitable consequence of the deteriorating humanitarian situation there and is due to the fact that there are no effective measures to halt the crimes committed against the citizens. Therefore, we must find a political solution to the Syrian crisis that will bring about peace and stability and safeguard the inalienable rights of our Syrian brothers.

We must find sustainable solutions to the area's crises. The responsibility of Qatar towards the people of Syria is reflected in the fact that in 2011 we gave $1.7 billion — $900 million through Government networks, $150 million through civil society organization and dozens of millions through specialized agencies such as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The figure of 20,000 Syrian refugees is already outdated; we now host 45,000. We have issued 7,000 visas to help them join their families in Doha. Between 2012 and 2015, 600,000 children benefited from our assistance. We must implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We remind everyone of the importance of finding the political will within the international community to establish efficient measures that will meet their basic needs. We must do so without any discrimination and with full respect of everyone's human rights.

Finally, we do hope that the meeting will achieve tangible results in order to address the very roots of the problems that refugees and migrants face and to provide them with humanitarian assistance so they can have a life of dignity. Otherwise, we will be unable to achieve global lasting solutions.

Co-Chair Lykketoft: I would like to remind speakers to speak slowly and to limit their statements to four minutes.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Juan Carlos Varela Rodríguez, President of Panama.

President Varela Rodríguez (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the people and Government of the Republic of Panama, it is an honour to participate in this plenary meeting to share our experiences in addressing the migration crisis in our region.

Irregular migratory flows continue to be one of the most significant challenges for the international community. Panama and the rest of the American continent cannot escape the global migrant and refugee crisis. The geographical characteristics of my country make us a bridge that connects the North and South of the continent. Every year, over 30,000 migrants risk their lives crossing our country in an attempt to reach countries in the North. Their migration is primarily due to socioeconomic reasons. In considering the issue, it is essential that all migration policies be based on safeguarding the most fundamental human right — the right to life. History has shown that migration cannot be stemmed but it can be adequately regulated to ensure orderly and secure flows, thereby bolstering global justice and equity via remittances, which serve to redistribute wealth.

Irregular migratory flows have two faces: a humanitarian face reflected in the families that abandon their country in search of a better future, and a criminal face reflected in the human trafficking networks. Aware of that reality, we launched Operation Controlled Flow two months ago, through which migrants from other regions who enter our national territory in vulnerable

conditions are provided with humanitarian care and are subject to strict health, migration and security controls.

We, the States members of the international community, should focus our attention on the reasons for such migrations and redouble our efforts to address the problems that drive our brothers to leave their countries. On the American continent specifically, we are very concerned about the situation in Haiti, where every State has been called on to support the successful completion of the electoral process, thereby strengthening the country's democratic institutions and economy. After the 2010 earthquake, thousands of Haitians emigrated to Brazil on humanitarian visas. In the wake of the effects of the economic downturn in our South American brother nation, they then decided to migrate northward, creating a humanitarian crisis in our region that is worsening daily. Panama will continue to work to responsibly address the humanitarian issues arising from this, but we need better coordination among all the countries involved to resolve the problem. We call respectfully for a rethinking of migration policies on such flows across the continent and for the sharing of information on migrants' records of entry into our countries for both humanitarian and security reasons.

Mr. Rahming (Bahamas), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

On the other hand, the rapprochement between the Governments of Cuba and the United States is beginning to show very positive results. We hope that this new aspect of the foreign policies of the two countries will continue to evolve towards complete normalization of their bilateral economic relations and the migration flows of citizens between them. The improved relations between Cuba and the United States are an excellent example of how diplomacy can help to improve migration flows and protect the lives of all those who try to migrate.

Panama affirms its commitment to treating migrants humanely, combating criminal networks that traffic in persons, rigorously enforcing our laws on migration while respecting human rights, and continuing to work actively with the international community to find a holistic and permanent solution to the issue.

The Acting Co-Chair: The General Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Perry Christie, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

Mr. Christie (Bahamas): I would like to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General for his leadership on the issue of migrants and refugees. The phenomenon of large movements of refugees and migrants has reached an unprecedented level of complexity and challenge. A global consensus on how to deal with it is urgently needed. The Bahamas therefore welcomes the efforts now under way to develop a common understanding on how best to effectively address and manage such movements.

While discussions of migration tend to focus on the negative aspects of irregular migration, we in the Bahamas, because of our own historical experience with large movements of migrants, are acutely mindful of the positive contributions that can sometimes result from regular migration, and of the considerable benefits to both the sending and receiving countries. Such benefits include economic development, cultural cross-fertilization and the promotion of State-to-State cooperation in managing matters of common concern. At the same time, however, it is imperative that we move in earnest towards the development of a comprehensive approach to irregular migration, one that focuses in particular on the underlying causes that motivate so many people to risk their lives and that those of their children in search of a better life in other countries.

The Bahamas, a country of some 400,000 people, constantly deals with large groups of irregular migrants entering it. People come to us in their thousands from Haiti. We continue to receive migrants from Cuba, more recently in larger numbers. That is unsustainable and presents both economic and social challenges for the Bahamas. We are working with the Governments of both these two countries to manage those challenges, and in the case of Cuba, migration talks are scheduled to resume in December. The immigration policies of the Bahamas are designed to protect the national security interests and social welfare of Bahamians as well as possible, while respecting the human rights and dignity of migrants and refugees.

We can no longer act as if it is business as usual. A more concerted effort must be made by all of us to manage irregular migration. In particular, we must stop criminal enterprises from benefiting from irregular migration. We must acknowledge the more aggressive elements involved, including those who use migration as a cover for trafficking in drugs, arms and persons. I therefore call on the United Nations and regional bodies to put in place a mechanism for

comprehensively addressing irregular migration and its impact, particularly on small island States such as the Bahamas.

The Bahamas is fully committed to the implementation and promotion of the migrant-related mandates of international and regional agreements to which we are a State party. Indeed, over the years we have enacted legislative and policy measures aimed at providing protection and support to regular and irregular migrants alike, including refugees entering our territory. I say again, however, that we must collectively consider the impacts of those who would misuse such procedures as a shield for unlawful behaviour, and to apply international laws and treaties accordingly.

The Bahamas welcomes the outcomes of today's meeting. They reflect the complex array of issues surrounding refugees and migration, and the equally complex responses that are needed for the regularization of large movements of refugees and migrants. We are particularly pleased to see that attention has been given to the need to alleviate some of the burden placed on migrant recipient countries such as the Bahamas. We look forward to future bilateral, regional and multilateral engagement based on that principle. More generally, the Bahamas welcomes the calls for increased support from international, regional and multilateral stakeholders for countries of origin, transit and destination. We must all agree on the urgent need to address the root causes of the problem that has brought us all together for this high-level meeting.

I would like to conclude by assuring all Member States of the ongoing and vigorous support of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas for all of the initiatives under way and pending in our common quest to address the large-scale movement of refugees and migrants.

The Acting Co-Chair: The General Assembly will now hear a statement by Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Sheikh Hasina (Bangladesh): I would like to commend the Secretary-General for convening the first-ever summit on refugees and migrants. We must seize this historic opportunity and deliver on a robust, ambitious and action-oriented blueprint for dealing with population movements. That must be done within a broader development context.

Migration is a public good. It must be appreciated as a reality and a freedom enhancer. In a connected world, goods, services and all sectors of production need to be able to move unhindered. The spread and speed of knowledge and technology make it even more compelling across economies and societies. Let me underline a few aspects of migration governance.

Mr. Bouah-Kamon (Côte d'Ivoire), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

First, mutual trust and respect, shared responsibility and inclusiveness are critical in addressing migration comprehensively. We must have general agreement on these universal principles.

Secondly, we pledge to leave no one behind. Migrants' rights have to be secured in all situations, irrespective of their status. For harmony across our diverse societies, the protection and promotion of the rights of migrants and refugees are equally essential.

Thirdly, migration and mobility need to be placed in a new, positive narrative. Bangladesh has therefore proposed a global compact on migration addressing some of the long-standing gaps in migration governance. The compact must build on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and capture elements and modalities that are ambitious and enforceable, yet balanced and flexible.

Fourthly, the promotion of tolerance and understanding is crucial for accommodating migrants and refugees. We must all rise above a solely identity-based discourse.

Fifthly, climate change and the resultant displacement of millions of people are a reality. The compact will have to take into account the protection needs of millions of climate-displaced people. The World Humanitarian Summit adopted the Partnership for Protection and Development, and the global compact should build on such innovative initiatives.

Promoting safe, orderly, regular and responsible movement of people is about securing individuals' dignity and well-being. Bangladesh, as the current Chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, will be happy to contribute to the development of the compact.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Mr. Sharif (Pakistan): We welcome this historic high-level meeting on the large-scale movement of refugees and migrants, which is among the most urgent humanitarian challenges of our times. We are meeting at a critical juncture as the number of people forcibly displaced from their homes reaches a record high and human suffering is at an unprecedented level. Much of this displacement has been neither voluntary nor orderly. People have been fleeing desperate conditions of conflict, war or poverty. These helpless people on the move deserve compassion and humane treatment. For millions of such people across the world, this high-level meeting offers the promise of hope. We must not fail them.

We have taken a momentous step today. By adopting the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), we are reforming our commitment to refugee and migrant communities across the world. The challenge now is to translate this noble initiative into reality.

The large influx of refugees and migrants to Europe has brought renewed focus to their plight. The shocking images of refugees in flight across the Mediterranean have shaken the conscience of the world, yet the true scale of this crisis lies beyond these headlines. It is the developing countries, including Pakistan, that continue to be at the forefront of bearing the burden of large-scale global human displacements.

Many of these protracted displacement situations have created complex political, socioeconomic, security and environmental challenges for host countries and local communities. It is time for the international community to forge a comprehensive global compact on the large-scale movement of refugees and migrants. The compact should be based on fair and equitable burden-sharing and aim to ensure that the displaced do not become victims of xenophobic attitudes and political expediency. The compact should also provide greater avenues for legal migration and take a realistic view of the situation. The comprehensive refugee response framework, adopted along with the New York Declaration, provides a useful starting point. We must build on this momentum. Going forward, we must also address the root causes of displacement and forced migration. Unless we resolutely put out the fires that have caused so much suffering, we will not be able to find a long-term solution to this crisis.

For nearly four decades, Pakistan has served as a generous host to millions of Afghan refugees. This is the largest protracted refugee situation in the world; even today, we are hosting over 2.5 million refugees in Pakistan. Despite our modest resources, the people of Pakistan have opened their hearts to their Afghan brothers and sisters. While financial support from the international community has waned, Pakistan's hospitality has not. Pakistan supports a safe and dignified return for all Afghan refugees to their homeland in a sustainable manner. We count on the active support of our Afghan brothers and international partners in creating an environment conducive to achieving this outcome. We hope that the international community will step forward and provide the necessary resources to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in a timely manner so as to support the sustainable return and reintegration of the Afghan refugees.

Sixty-five years ago, the architects of the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees gathered here in New York. We had a pious hope that the foundation they laid would have a value that exceeded its contractual scope. In setting a normative standard to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, today we have a similar opportunity to help create a world where no one is left behind in our shared quest for human dignity.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Christian Kern, Federal Chancellor of Austria.

Mr. Kern (Austria): Let me first thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations for organizing today's event on refugees and migration, which are the most pressing issues of our time. Like others, Austria has been facing large numbers of migrants in recent years — most of them refugees from crisis regions and most of them using irregular routes to Europe. We have seen one of the richest regions in the world, the European Union, struggling to cope with this phenomenon. Indeed, we have seen that it might have the potential to politically destabilize one of the most stable regions in the world. Austria, with its long-lasting tradition of coping with huge inflows of refugees — not least due to its location in the heart of Europe — is no exception to that. While migration overall should be and can be mutually beneficial, we also recognize in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) that forced displacement and irregular migration can also present complex challenges to the hosting countries.

How can we deal with this? First of all, there can be no doubt that we have to stay firm in our commitment to respecting fundamental human rights and international human rights law, including when we are dealing with irregular migration. However, irregular migration poses significant risks for the migrants themselves. Thousands of migrants have lost their lives on the dangerous routes to Europe in recent years. Smugglers have ruthlessly exploited people in need, and often migrants are stranded in camps without adequate provisions of food, shelther and basic medical care. That is why we must put an end to irregular migration, in the interests of migrants and host countries alike.

With respect to this challenge, Austria will host a regional summit meeting on 24 September in Vienna to discuss closer cooperation and coordination among the countries along the Balkan route. While we must close irregular routes, we need to open legal routes at the same time in order to save lives. For example, resettlement schemes have already been put in place by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and we engage in a common effort to make them work efficiently.

We are aware that it is not only Europe that is affected by migration. We would therefore like to commend the efforts of those countries hosting very large communities of refugees in direct proximity to long-lasting conflicts. The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), adopted here today, is very clear about the fact that no single nation can solve this problem. That is why all of us must do our fair share in this regard, both in the spirit of solidarity and in our own interest.

But all this will not be enough because, in the longer term, the only sustainable and most effective way to solve the problem is to solve it within the regions of origin — that is, we have to address the root causes of migration, which are conflicts, climate change and the lack of opportunities, increasingly caused by economic divergence across and within nations. These are the challenges to which we must respond. We need to increase our efforts in crisis resolution, as it is clearly effective and a precondition for further development. In this context, the United Nations, of course, plays a key role.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway.

Ms. Solberg (Norway): The refugee crisis is one of the greatest challenges of our time, and we need to work together to address it. This is a global crisis that no country or region can handle alone. The time has come for a global approach and real partnerships. Migration has always been a driver of human mobility, development and growth, but migration should be voluntary, not forced by circumstances.

Many countries have made impressive efforts to provide protection under difficult circumstances. Norway will continue to assist refugees and internally displaced persons in conflict zones. We have increased our humanitarian budget by more than 25 per cent this year alone. We are receiving our share of refugees and we are working to integrate them into our society. We welcome and support the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution71/1), adopted today. Let me highlight four critical areas.

First, we must distinguish clearly between refugees and economically motivated migrants. Otherwise, we will undermine our ability to protect those who qualify for protection and endanger the entire institution of asylum. Secondly, we need closer cooperation on the return of people who do not qualify for asylum or protection. Countries must readmit migrants who have returned home voluntarily or otherwise. Thirdly, we must stress that international law already provides a solid legal framework for the protection of refugees. What we need is the more effective implementation of existing instruments and standards. Fourthly, we must address the root causes in order to achieve a long-term solution. That is why Norway will keep its development assistance at a high level and why we must all work together to reach the Sustainable Development Goals.

In this effort, closer cooperation among humanitarian and development actors is vital. Quality education and good health are crucial for reducing poverty and mitigating the root causes of migration. That is why Norway has increased its spending on education worldwide by 70 per cent over the past three years. That is also why our support for global health efforts equals a total of over $425 million in 2016.

We are also stepping up our support for education in times of crisis and conflict. The Syrian conference in London in February paved the way to increase support for job creation and educational opportunities for Syrian refugees in the region. I would now like to urge all partners to deliver on their pledges. We will

not overcome the refugee crisis by building walls in future. We will overcome it by working together to find common solutions.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister of Sweden.

Mr. Löfven (Sweden): Let me begin with a quote.:

> "Sometimes I can see us again out on the boundless ocean, where the ship was tossed by massive waves that threatened us all. And sometimes I think I can hear the wailing from ships and people descending into the deep grave."

This is a letter from a migrant. She arrived on a new continent along with thousands of others fleeing hunger and poverty. Her name was Ida Lindgren and the year was 1870. More than a million Swedes emigrated to America; many of them arrived here in New York at Ellis Island. When their lives improved, one out of five returned home, taking with them newly gained knowledge and spirit of entrepreneurship.

Today, Sweden is a country that people flee to and migrate to, not from. What have we learned?

First, we must fight the root causes of forced migration. Migration in itself will never solve inequality and injustice in the world. We must fight hunger and poverty so that people will not have to risk their lives on rickety boats. We need strong societies that share prosperity, promote decent work and inclusive growth and, most importantly, work for sustainable peace and security. Sweden will remain a leading donor, promote the link between development and conflict prevention, and address these issues when we take our seat in the Security Council next year.

Secondly, people fleeing for their lives must be able to find protection. For most refugees, this means a camp in a neighbouring country; for a minority, it means seeking asylum in another part of the world. For all of them, we have a shared responsibility. Sweden will do its part, and we will push the European Union to do more. We are calling for an increase in global support for United Nations agencies. Rapid response capacity and preparedness for humanitarian emergencies must be improved. A system for early warning and analysis is needed. We cannot shirk our obligations and leave the burden to a few. Protection is a shared international responsibility.

Thirdly, migration can boost development. When people travel and refugees return home, not only does wealth spread, but so do ideas and knowledge. That is why we should promote safer migration by combating human trafficking and protecting the human rights of all migrants.

When Ida Lindgren left Sweden in the late 1800s, the relatives she left behind saw the beginning of Sweden's transformation from a poor agricultural society to what is now a leading industrial nation. This transformation was achieved peacefully, through decent work and inclusive growth, turning the wealth of a country into welfare for all. There is no better policy against forced migration than that, and it should be every Government's highest priority to adopt a similar approach. But when societies fail, when the horror of war forces people to leave their homes, then we should all be there to share the burden and provide protection. This is at the very heart of our international cooperation and of our humanity.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Alexander De Croo, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Development Cooperation, Digital Agenda, Telecom and Postal Services of Belgium.

Mr. De Croo (Belgium): Belgium thanks the Secretary-General for taking the initiative to convene this important high-level meeting.

We especially welcome the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) and its two annexes. These texts are important first steps towards a true, multilateral response to uncontrolled migration flows and to the question of refugees. Yet our work has only just begun. Today we are launching a common effort to elaborate two new compacts by 2018 — one to set the rules for fostering safe, legal and orderly migration, the second to establish shared responsibilities and true international solidarity to tackle the global refugee crisis.

Indeed, shared responsibility and solidarity are, for Belgium, the two guiding principles for dealing with both refugees and migrants. There must be solidarity with countries of origin and transit countries, as well as with host countries so that there is a better spread of asylum-seekers among them. Further, countries that face illegal and uncontrolled migration and refugee flows need assistance. Solidarity and shared international responsibility is required to end the war

and violent conflicts that force millions to flee their homes, looking for safer and more secure places that are not always willing or ready to host them. Just as important is the responsibility of all Governments to do everything they possibly can to prevent their citizens from being forced to flee their homes or emigrate. Migration has to be a positive choice, not a necessity.

Only by tackling the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacements can we create the conditions for a safe, legal and orderly migration. To better understand these root causes, on Thursday, 22 September, Belgium, together with the Government of Mali, the International Organization for Migration and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, will organize a high-level event on the use of data to better understand migration. We hope that many will join us.

Another fundamental principle is the indivisible and universal character of human rights. In these challenging times in particular, we cannot treat human rights as trivial — not the rights of migrants, not the rights of refugees and especially not the rights of women and children who are often the most vulnerable groups.

Belgium strongly commits itself to a powerful and global response to these important challenges. Together with the United Nations and our European, Atlantic and other allies, we are strongly committed to reaching a peace agreement in the Syrian conflict. This implies the military and political defeat of the so-called Islamic State. Belgium is also strongly engaged in the European efforts to build partnerships around migration, to support the European Union (EU) military operation in the Southern Central Mediterranean and the EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa, of which Belgium is the second-largest donor country.

This year, our financial contribution to humanitarian programmes for refugees has reached €92 million. For Belgium, this is historically our highest contribution, and we will continue these efforts. Of these €92 million, €65 million are in support of Syrian refugees, an increase of 25 per cent over 2015.

At the same time, we are focusing our international development policies on the least developed countries (LDCs). We have decided to allocate half of our official development aid to the LDCs in order to reduce the vulnerabilities of displaced people and help their integration into host communities. In our own country, we welcomed more than 45,000 refugees last year and, this year, our host and resettlement capacity will exceed 20,000.

In the distant and remote peace of this Hall at the United Nations Headquarters, we have today adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), which is a declaration that goes beyond mere symbolism. The New York Declaration sets forth international obligations that protect the young girl who is on the run and who lives in a place she cannot call home, that give hope to the family that only knows the shelter of their improvised tent, and that offer a future to the child who has never known life outside a refugee camp. No one can escape this historic responsibility, not one leader, not one country, not one Government.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Don Pramudwinai, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand.

Mr. Pramudwinai (Thailand): In contrast to Sweden's touching story about 1870, we also heard this morning about the unfathomable plight of migrants and refugees through the voice of a young woman named Murad. Her plea has shaken many of us here. Are we pleased that this meeting has had to be convened so that we look seriously into tackling this unprecedented yet enduring problem of humankind? Although it is historic, this meeting certainly does not stand alone, as it builds on many efforts across the globe designed to respond to the refugee and migrant crisis.

Thailand views this meeting as a valuable platform for many integrated efforts aimed at responding to large and mixed movements, as well as for future actions that must be concrete and based on the principle of international burden-sharing. Responses to large movements of migrants must be swift, coordinated and, most importantly, humane. To directly solve the problem related to large movements of refugees and migration, we must first look at the root causes and address the underlying factors of forced migration. Such efforts may require strong political will. They will no doubt encompass the protection and promotion of human rights in countries of origin and underline the linkages between migration and development. Prevention is the key, and in order to use that key, one must closely look at the root causes. Great commitment will also be required of political leaders.

At the same time, the impact of migration on first-asylum countries is less widely discussed. These countries are the ones that have taken the largest number of refugees and migrants, which has been a burden on their local economies and infrastructure, which has in turn created further challenges in the funding of health care, employment and education. As time goes by, a pull factor comes into play, as the conditions in countries of origin do not improvement and more movements occur through dangerous sea routes or other routes of transit.

In regions experiencing a large influx of displaced people, it is necessary to separate those who are abusing the system from those who are in genuine need of protection. A robust screening process is therefore crucial in addressing that issue. Such a screening mechanism must also be used so as to devote particular attention to vulnerable groups, such as women, children and the elderly. There are millions of children who are on the move and leaving their homes. Some may be accompanied by parents or relatives, but some are completely alone; we must also offer protection to those children.

We all share the inherent values of humanitarianism and compassion, and we want to make this world a better place for all. Those core values should be able to bind the international community together and serve as a basis for cooperation. Thailand fully embraces those core values and, because of that, we respect the principle of non-refoulement. We are working to end statelessness and are starting to discuss with our neighbouring countries the safe and dignified return of displaced persons who have lived in temporary shelters along our borders for decades. Our humanitarian tradition has led us to provide health services for migrants, regardless of their legal status. We also value the contribution of migrants to our formal economy.

Today's meeting is a momentous opportunity not only to discuss ways and means for international cooperation, but also to remind ourselves that only by fostering our shared humanitarian core values can we have the power and the ability to protect irregular migrants and refugees and our children, who truly need us in order to lead full and happy lives.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Malcolm Turnbull, Prime Minister of Australia.

Mr. Turnbull (Australia): Australia is one of the most successful multicultural societies in the world. From the oldest human cultures of our first Australians to those of people that come from almost every Member State, ours is indeed an immigration nation. More than a quarter of our people were born overseas. Australians are not defined by religion or race; we are defined by political values, a common commitment to democracy, freedom and the rule of law, underpinned and secured by mutual respect. Those values drive our approach to migration. We invite 190,000 migrants each year to join our nation of 24 million people.

Our commitment to refugees is long-standing, as seen in our Humanitarian Settlement Services programme, dating back to 1947. That has made Australians truly global citizens, connected by family, culture and language to people across the globe. Those links drive economic development, trade and innovation. Australians are enriched by the cultural diversity of our community. We regard our people as our greatest assets and our unity and diversity as one of our greatest strengths. That is not a recent development. As just one example, there is the Special Broadcasting Service, the public broadcaster, founded nearly 40 years ago, which not only broadcasts in dozens of languages but interprets and celebrates our multicultural society and the values of mutual respect for the whole society. Diversity is an investment against marginalization and extremism. It helps our community unite rather than be divided.

At a time when global concern around immigration and border control is rising, the need to build community support for migration has never been clearer. Australia's experience bears that out. Addressing irregular migration through secure borders has been essential in creating the confidence that the Government can manage migration in a way that mitigates risk and focuses humanitarian assistance on those who need it the most. That has had a direct impact on our ability to provide generous and effective support to refugees. Without that confidence, we would not have been able to increase our intake of refugees by more than 35 per cent, leading us to have the world's third-largest permanent resettlement programme. We would also not have been able to commit to welcoming 12,000 additional Syrian and Iraqi refugees on top of the scheduled number.

Of course, not every country is an island. Each country needs to institute policies that suit its own circumstances. However, the reality of people smuggling is one based on profit from, and exploitation

of, some of the most vulnerable people on Earth. We are also all too familiar with the tragedy of lives lost at sea. The unregulated movement of people globally is growing fast. We need measures to create order out of the resulting chaos, if we are to provide safe pathways for refugees and target those who are most in need.

Such challenges cannot be addressed without strong international cooperation. We need to work together to facilitate safe and regular migration for refugees and migrants and, above all, ensure that those who are able to do so can return to their homes safely and as quickly as possible. We also need to support, rather than duplicate, the important work of the International Organization for Migration and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Australia welcomes the momentum we are seeing in the United Nations system and internationally. We are committed to playing a role that provides resettlement options to genuine refugees, that sees our multicultural society grow from strength to strength, and that supports international efforts to help the most vulnerable.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on Mr. Perfecto Yasay Jr., Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines.

Mr. Yasay (Philippines): The Philippines welcomes the political declaration of the high-level meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants, with its annexes entitled "Comprehensive refugee response framework" and "Towards a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration". The Philippines has approximately 10 million of its citizens working or living overseas. For that reason, the protection of the rights of Filipinos overseas and the promotion of their welfare, as well as their recognition as active partners in national development, are among the deepest and most sacred commitments of Philippine foreign policy.

During the negotiations on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Philippines strongly advocated the recognition of the positive contribution of migrants to inclusive growth and sustainable development in source, transit and destination countries. We likewise worked to ensure the promotion and protection of the human rights of all migrant workers, regardless of migration status. We also sought to include migrants in the list of vulnerable groups. In all cases, migrants' needs must be addressed by the 2030 Agenda, with the view that migrants should be empowered.

We have therefore developed guidelines on migrants in countries in crisis, jointly with the United States, our co-Chair, other partners, and the International Organization for Migration. The guidelines provide best practices and principles in addressing the needs of migrants in the event of a crisis, whether caused by conflict or natural disasters, in their host country. The guidelines emphasize that the protection of migrants in vulnerable situations is a shared responsibility among the sending, destination and even transit States.

Today's meeting is a critical step. First, in dealing with the negative perceptions of migrants, who, at one time or another, encounter xenophobia and fear, or are subjected to intolerance caused by a lack of understanding of others. Secondly, the meeting re-establishes the focus on the role of migrants as a positive force for sustainable development. This meeting is also a landmark event in strengthening the Government's framework for international migration. We look forward to engaging stakeholders in the process of intergovernmental negotiations that will finally lead to the adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration in 2018. That process must begin at the soonest.

With the same earnestness we welcome the adoption of the comprehensive refugee response framework (resolution 71/1, annex I). The Philippines has always kept its doors open to refugees seeking asylum. In years past, we granted asylum to Russians in the 1920s, to Jews, as well as to Spanish and Chinese people, in the 1930s. In recent years, we welcomed to our shores Vietnamese, Cambodian and Lao people from the 1970s to the 1990s. For the Philippines, the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol comprise the cornerstone of international law on refugee protection. We therefore reaffirm our commitment to the goals of the Convention and its Protocol. We also support the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons.

We will sustain our support for the emergency transit mechanism, a cooperation arrangement with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration. The mechanism provides for the immediate evacuation of refugees who risk refoulement and persecution in their countries of origin. We continue to support the UNHCR. Through institutional coordination at the global level, we can ably address the refugee crisis and provide effective and lasting

solutions. Our support has been provided in the form of financial contributions since 1980, as well as through country-specific humanitarian assistance programmes.

This meeting is neither isolated nor insulated from the observant eyes of the media and the rest of the world. They are watching as we act together for the cause of the large numbers of refugees and migrants. Almost without any choice, millions of refugees and migrants are pinning their hopes for a predictable future on us. Surely we represent a positive force in their lives.

We are interconnected as people in this world marked by conflict and peace. Since time immemorial, some people have left their countries to seek a better future, escape an intolerable situation, or break away from the cycle of poverty and oppression in the country of their birth. Our answer to their need to live their lives all over again is to secure their journey and their destination, thereby fulfilling the worthy goals of the Charter of the United Nations, which states that we wish to "Reaffirm faith in ... the dignity and worth of the human person" and "promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom". We must not fail those who need us most in their most trying times. Our actions will affirm our solidarity and common humanity with refugees anywhere in the world.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly will now hear a statement by Her Excellency Mrs. Theresa May, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mrs. May (United Kingdom): I want to start by welcoming the focus of the General Assembly on this critical topic and by thanking the Secretary-General for his leadership. Across the world today there are 65 million displaced people. That has particular resonance for the United Kingdom as that number is equivalent to our entire population. It is also nearly double the number of displaced people of a decade ago. Yet United Nations appeals continue to be underfunded, host countries are not getting enough support and displaced people are not receiving the aid and opportunities they need.

So the international community must come together and find new ways to deal with the challenges we face today. That is why I welcome the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1). As the second-largest bilateral provider of humanitarian assistance and the only Group of Seven economy to meet our commitment to spend 0.7 per cent of national income on development assistance, we provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to millions of people each year. We have sought innovative and durable solutions to protracted crises, while working to build stability, create jobs and support the poorest across the world, helping those most in need and addressing the drivers of mass population movement. But we must all do more.

So the United Kingdom will continue leading the global response, and I will shortly outline further financial commitments. But today I want to talk about building a more effective policy approach, one which involves addressing the root causes of forced displacement, providing proper protection for refugees and reducing today's unmanageable population movements.

As we see across the world, conflicts and crises are becoming more protracted, and the number of displaced people is increasing. We must continue our efforts to end conflicts, tackle persecution and human rights abuses and support those affected. As the New York Declaration states, it is the duty of every country to respond. We must also be clear that this crisis has been exacerbated by unprecedented levels of uncontrolled migration. It is not only refugees who are moving in large numbers; there are also those seeking greater economic opportunities. That is a global challenge imposing a huge strain on countries across Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe.

Of course, controlled, legal and safe migration benefits our economies. And there is nothing wrong with the desire to migrate for a better life. But the uncontrolled migration we see today is not in the interest of migrants who are exposed to danger, not in the interest of the countries they are leaving, travelling through or seeking to reach, and not in the interest of refugees, for whom resources and popular support are reduced.

Alongside increased efforts to provide humanitarian assistance and sustainable development, I believe there are three practical things we can do to address the problem. First, we should help ensure that refugees claim asylum in the first safe country that they reach, and establish that as a principle. The current trend of onward movement benefits criminal gangs, endangers people and reduces the prospects of refugees ever returning home to rebuild their countries. We must do far more to support the first safe countries themselves, by assisting the refugees and host communities, which

is an approach that is starting to work in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey.

Secondly, we need to better distinguish between refugees and economic migrants. Failing to do so only encourages more people to put their lives in the hands of criminal gangs. We fully support the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, but we must ensure that it is properly applied and that countries have the capacity to do so.

Thirdly, we need to be clear that all countries have the right to control their borders and to protect their citizens. We must be equally clear that countries have a duty to manage their borders so as to reduce onward flows of illegal and uncontrolled migration. We need to do more to help them do so.

That is a shared global challenge for which we must all take our share of responsibility. The United Kingdom is committed to working with all participants to turn the commitments in the New York Declaration into reality, and together we can help millions of people who desperately need our help.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi Mansour, President of Yemen.

President Mansour (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset allow me to express our thanks and appreciation to all of those who contributed to organizing this meeting concerning an issue of extreme importance, especially for my country. In fact, Yemen is the only one among the Gulf or Arabian Peninsula States that has signed the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

Yet, despite all of the challenges facing my country, we have for the past 20 years provided assistance to refugees. We will continue to do so, as we have done, starting with the refugees from Somalia. Yemen has approximately 1.2 million refugees, including asylum-seekers and irregular migrants. Some 14,000 refugees arrive monthly in Yemen, including 12,000 from Ethiopia and 2,000 from Somalia. The number of new arrivals in the first half of the year exceeded 61,000, according to United Nations statistics. All those present here may know that Yemen treats all of its refugees like Yemenis. They work, attend school, live normal lives and compete with Yemenis in all walks of life, including commerce.

My country has actively participated in meetings concerning Somali refugees convened by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Moreover, Yemen has hosted numerous regional conferences on refugees. At the most recent meeting, in 2013, an important declaration was adopted, known as the Sana'a Declaration, concerning the status of refugees from Somalia and the Horn of Africa and the challenges they face. It discussed possible solutions and the importance of calling on the international community to increase its support to meet the needs of the refugees and mitigate their suffering.

The Republic of Yemen believes that efforts to address the large flows of refugees and migrants must be anchored in the root causes. Therefore, political solutions are optimal and are urgently needed in order to deal with the relevant disputes and conflicts. In addition, coordinated international efforts, shared responsibility and burden-sharing are all critical in dealing with the issue and in raising important questions that cannot be avoided.

Against that background, my country calls for cooperation and partnership on the part of the international community in sharing the burden and addressing the challenges. We cannot face the political, security, economic, social and developmental challenges alone. How could my country, on its own, deal with the situation of war and conflict resulting from a coup d'état by Ali Abdullah Saleh and the Houthi militia against the State's legitimacy, as well as national consensus?

We are suffering from innumerable problems generated by the large numbers of refugees fleeing from the Horn of Africa. That movement has manifested itself recently in the practice of using of refugees — especially those from Somalia — as mercenaries enlisted to fight alongside the Houthis. We have arrested a number of Somali children on the battlefield, a situation that demands further assistance from the international community to our country and its institutions.

I reiterate my call on all countries of the world for their solidarity and engagement in supporting Yemen in addressing the challenges imposed by that problem. We wish to stress the principle of international solidarity with the countries hosting refugees. Moreover, we must address internal displacement issues. My country has over 3 million internally displaced persons owing to

increased militia attacks against cities and peaceful civilians, who are enduring severe hardship as a result.

Cooperation with the relevant international organizations is critical in ensuring the delivery of humanitarian assistance to refugees, migrants and others in need. All necessary support should be provided to those organizations so as to enable them to fulfil their mandates under international law and treaties, as well as national legislation. We stress the need to resolve long-standing refugee issues, and we must never forget the Palestinian refugees, who continue to suffer injustice and oppression. Here we would like to stress the need to ensure their rights to voluntary return and a just solution for their plight. We also underline the need for all States and international organizations to provide assistance to individuals fleeing from crises and to provide decent care and protection. Refugees and migrants must be guaranteed protection along their journey to a State of refuge.

I would like to thank all of the local, regional and international organizations providing support to Yemen, in particular the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre, the United Arab Emirates Red Crescent Society, the Kuwaiti non-governmental organizations and all of the humanitarian agencies in the Gulf region. I express many thanks to all of those entities.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey.

Mr. Çavuşoğlu (Turkey): First of all I would like to thank the United Nations for organizing such an important and timely meeting today. My country, Turkey, is today at the crossroads of irregular migration. With more than 3 million refugees, Turkey hosts the largest refugee population in the world. At the same time, we also continue to fight against human smugglers on land and at sea. Through the tireless efforts of our relevant authorities, we have been able to decrease irregular migration in the Aegean Sea by 95 per cent during the past six months. However, we also see that our unilateral efforts are insufficient for coping with the global problem.

We have to state, loudly and clearly, that the world needs a better strategy to deal with irregular migration and combat the traffickers. And we need it urgently. The strategy should have three dimensions. First, we need to address the root causes of refugee movements. That is not an option. It is an obligation. We must, for instance, find a political solution to the Syrian conflict in our region. Otherwise, it will remain a major source of irregular migration in our part of the world. If we do not overcome the structural problems of the least-developed countries, people will continue to search for a better future abroad.

Secondly, transit countries in particular should be supported. Countries neighbouring conflict regions are especially and disproportionately affected by the flow of migrants and refugees. Financial assistance and resettlement are key instruments in that regard. Unfortunately, our own experience shows that it is almost impossible to talk about burden-sharing. Officially, Turkey has spent more than $12 billion for the Syrians alone and if the amount that municipalities and human rights organizations spend is added, the total is more than $20 billion. The contribution of the international community remained at $512 million. We will continue to do what we can, but we have to admit that it is not fair.

Thirdly, negative rhetoric such as xenophobia, racism and islamophobia towards refugees or migrants must be stopped. Extremism will only increase the problems we face today. It will backfire and fuel terrorism. Today politicians, especially in Western Europe, must be more cautious than ever. Any strategy can be successful if it is carried out collectively. Individual efforts cannot produce lasting solutions. There is one lesson that the entire world must have learned by now and that is that no one is immune from the consequences of the current refugee crises.

Turkey is ready to do its part. Last year, upon our initiative, the General Assembly discussed irregular migration and the problems of Syrian refugees. Migration was one of the major topics of our Group of 20 chairmanship, in 2015. The first-ever World Humanitarian Summit, which was held in Istanbul last May, had one clear message about migration — One Humanity, Shared Responsibility. And now, we are committed to assuming a leading role in the preparatory phase of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration by 2018. We believe that this first-ever United Nations summit on migrants and refugees will help our efforts in dealing with irregular migration.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Hillary Onek, Minister for Disaster Preparedness, Management and Refugees of Uganda.

Mr. Onek (Uganda): Currently, Uganda is experiencing an unforeseen influx of South Sudanese refugees into the country, having received over 200,000 since the beginning of July alone. Add that to the current population and the continuing influx from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi, and Uganda is now host to close to 700,000 refugees. We expect Uganda to be host to over 800,000 refugees by the end of the year. As a result of the continuous influx from the region, Uganda is, as of today, the eighth largest refugee hosting country in the world and third in relation to gross domestic product, in an environment where, globally, the asylum space is dwindling.

Uganda has endured such challenges since the days when it hosted refugees from Poland during the Second World War. Since 1959 to date, Uganda has on average been host to approximately 160,000 refugees. That solidarity has now been codified into policy, whereby refugee protection and management are integrated into our country's national development plan, as well as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. The Government of Uganda is largely implementing a comprehensive response, which needs to be adopted globally. Our Government needs the commitment of the international community to ensuring sustained interventions in the protection regime in the country and to building strong partnerships internally, regionally and globally to address the question of forced migration.

Uganda needs support for transition to humanitarian solutions prospects for protracted refugee situations. It has the enabling frameworks in place and strong partnerships transcending the humanitarian development divide. Uganda will continue to ensure that the rights of refugees are respected through, first of all, prima facie recognition of all refugees, the provision of identification papers or travel documents, the registration of all children born in refugee camps in Uganda, and the provision of access to social services, such as health and education and to freedom of movement. We also give them the right to work and establish businesses.

Through the settlement approach, refugees are provided with land for housing and agricultural production either in Government-gazetted areas or on community-owned land. The curent value of that land is approximately $50 million. Steps have been taken by the Government of Uganda to secure a loan from the World Bank that will help address the development gaps in refugee hosting areas and to develop the Refugee Host Population Empowerment (ReHOPE) programme. United Nations Country team involvement in ReHOPE would be indispensable and allow for assistance to be provided to the ReHOPE programme. The Government appreciates the recent commitment of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to giving $31 million towards ReHOPE interventions in 2016 and 2017. The Refugee Host Population Empowerment project is aimed at encouraging refugees to be financially and economically active and working together with the host community.

In addition to all of that, there is a need to develop the institutional capacity of the Ministry and the local Governments hosting refugees to maintain the current protection regime. This includes capacitating the Ministry's department with the requisite human and financial resources to implement the World Bank and ReHOPE programmes.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Prakash Sharan Mahat, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.

Mr. Mahat (Nepal): International migration is a multidimensional reality of our time, and we must face it effectively and in its entirety. We must seek to ensure orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including the implementation of a planned and well-managed migration policy, taking into account the various types and causes of migration such as economic, political, environmental, conflict and so on, and appropriate humanitarian responses in time of need. Migrant workers today constitute a significant portion of current human mobility throughout the world, contributing to the development and growth of most economies, as well as helping their families in the sending countries. The remittances they earn is not without huge and long-term social, cultural, environmental costs back home.

Nepal reaffirms the view that there should be coordinated and concerted efforts at the national, regional and international levels to protect and promote the basic human rights and dignity of migrant workers and also to combat violence against women migrant workers and protect their basic human rights. At the same time, rights of migrant workers, as recognized by the relevant international instruments, should be guaranteed by the host countries.

This morning we adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), which I believe will address many of the issues surrounding refugees and migrants. There are, nevertheless, some important issues that need our urgent attention.

First of all, the problem of the development countries that host large numbers of refugees should also be taken into consideration in the light of their capacity to do so and their ability to make commitments contained in the adopted outcome document. Expecting more commitments from refugee-hosting countries, including the least developed countries, would only add to their burden, rather than apply the much-discussed principle of burden-sharing.

Secondly, Nepal believes that since not all migrants are refugees, they should not be treated as such. For example, Nepali nationals in different countries are legally working there at the request of the host countries. Despite our limited resources and capacity, and given that we are a non-signatory country to both the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, Nepal has been a generous and long-standing host to refugees of various countries of origin on humanitarian grounds.

Nepal is grateful to the international community for the understanding and support it has given Nepal in managing the refugees within its borders. We have come to realize, however, that the issue of political refugees can hardly be resolved if the source countries stay on the sidelines. In the cases of refugees and migrants resulting from man-made causes, the responsible country should be held accountable rather than the country where the refugees and migrants are residing. That is especially true in the case of a country like Nepal.

While Nepal appreciates the concrete initiatives taken by many developed countries to resettle the Bhutanese refugees that have been living in Nepal for a long time, their right to go back to their homeland should be respected. At the same time, I would like to remind the Assembly that the remaining refugees living in refugee camps in Nepal are eagerly waiting to return to their homeland. The international community should continue to fund the refugees until they are resettled back in their homeland.

I now conclude, confident that the deliberations on such important international issues and commitments made here today and in the coming days will significantly contribute to addressing the issues relating to large movements of migrants and refugees. Nepal looks forward to the judicious implementation of the New York Declaration reached as the outcome of the high-level meeting.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Yun Byung-se, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Yun (Republic of Korea): Last year, at the high-level meeting on refugees and migration, I cited the remarks of António Guterres, former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, that the refugee issue is not a mere crisis of numbers but a crisis of responsibility and values. Yet we still cannot afford to breathe a sigh of relief. In fact, the sense of crisis has deepened. The footage of 5-year-old Omran Daqneesh in Syria, bloodied and covered in dust, was a stark call to reality, reminding us of the tragic death of Aylan Kurdi last year.

The issue of refugees and migrants is not new. However, what alarms us is the unprecedented magnitude of their movements and the complexity behind their causes. The number of refugees has reached its highest level since the Second World War. At the same time, forced displacement is inextricably linked to various push factors including conflicts, violence, terrorism, and crushing poverty. Moreover, prolonged conflicts have further connected refugees and migrants, as those who flee for safety may as well become migrants seeking a better life.

The twin crises of refugees and migrants are a multifaceted issue in which peace and security, development and human rights are intertwined. It therefore requires a comprehensive and holistic approach by the international community, as agreed at the first World Humanitarian Summit this May, held at the initiative of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. To deal with the unprecedented challenge of large movements of refugees and migrants, it is crucial that we coordinate immediate and longer-term efforts in a systematic way, with the United Nations at the centre. In the short term, we should bolster protection and humanitarian assistance to those in need, regardless of their status. During this process, the principles of non-refoulement, fair legal processes, and the protection of human rights must be ensured. In that regard, we welcome the adoption today of the New York

Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) as an outcome of this meeting.

The Republic of Korea, the first country in Asia to enact a refugees and asylum-seekers act, has continued to improve its refugee status determination process and has facilitated better treatment for asylum-seekers. Last year, the Korean Government also launched a pilot resettlement project to actively join the international community's burden-sharing efforts.

To resolve the refugee crisis in a sustainable manner in the longer term, development cooperation should go hand in hand with humanitarian assistance. As refugee crises persist, there is a growing need to provide capacity-building to help refugees to stand on their own two feet again. The most vulnerable populations, particularly women and children, deserve more dedicated attention.

In addition, my Government has expanded financial assistance for refugees tenfold over the past five years. We are also linking humanitarian assistance and development through the provision of education, health and vocational training to refugees. Through the Better Life for Girls initiative, put forth by President Park Geun-hye at the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda in September last year (see A/70/PV.7), the Republic of Korea is particularly focusing on women's empowerment.

Along with the high-level meeting on Syrian refugees in February and the World Humanitarian Summit in May, I believe that today's high-level meeting marks the third significant milestone in our search for a sustainable solution to the refugee and migrant crises. I sincerely hope that today's meeting will effectively garner the political will necessary to tackle the most pressing challenge we face together as humankind.

The Acting Co-Chair (*spoke in French*): I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Simonetta Sommaruga, Federal Councillor and Head of the Federal Department of Justice and Police of the Swiss Confederation.

Ms. Sommaruga (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Last year, Europe experienced what people in many countries in Africa and the Middle East have lived through for decades: the daily arrival of thousands of people seeking protection or a better life. How has Europe responded to this significant challenge? As we have seen, Europe was not prepared. Often overwhelmed, it was unable to respond collectively to the crisis. Regrettably, the crisis showed that in emergencies, many think only of themselves.

Today, Europe still lacks a common asylum policy. However, the arrival of thousands of people fleeing war has given rise to joint action in Europe. The relocation and resettlement programmes were agreed to last year under major political pressure. Even if they do not go very far, they are at least going in the right direction — towards shared responsibility. From now on we must not let migration be exploited by populist parties for domestic political purposes.

That said, what is the international community's role in dealing with the rise in migration movements? It is fivefold. First, to this day the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the human-rights treaties remain the best instruments for ensuring that migrants and refugees are protected. Secondly, we must find ways of sharing the responsibilities that result from these international challenges, equitably and on a global scale. Thirdly, we must come up with ways of responding to the new kinds of forced displacement that we are seeing, such as movements caused by global warming. That is also why Switzerland supports integrating the International Organization for Migration into the United Nations system. Fourthly, multilateral policies should always view migration as a cause for hope. In most cases, emigrants work hard and thus help to improve well-being in their countries of residence just as much as in their countries of origin. Fifthly and lastly, multilateral migration policies require platforms that promote discussion and cooperation between States.

For all those reasons, Switzerland believes firmly in the importance of supporting the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) that we have adopted today. It emphasizes the three priorities that we believe will be essential in the future — strengthening the protection of refugees and migrants in vulnerable situations, preventing forced displacement by addressing their underlying causes and promoting displaced persons' economic and social autonomy, while taking into consideration the interests and needs of local populations. Switzerland also supports producing two global compacts on migration and refugees by 2018. The success of those initiatives will depend on their ability to take advantage of the expertise available in Geneva, as the nerve centre of issues relating to migration and refugees. In that regard, Switzerland declares its willingness to lend its full support and play an active and dynamic role in the area.

History has always shown us that there are always two ways to respond to broad international challenges. One consists of retreating into one's domestic affairs; the other is about displaying the courage to take innovative steps to achieve stronger multilateral cooperation. The crises that have occurred around migration have often turned out to be at the heart of the our greatest multilateral advances. In that regard, we should recall the Geneva Convention, which was birthed in the wake of the Second World War. Many questions remain open regarding multilateral policy on refugees and migration, just as there are many different interests operating, some of them opposed to one another. But we need only one compass direction to steer by, and that is human dignity.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.

United Nations A/71/PV.4 B

General Assembly
Seventy-first session

Official Records

4th plenary meeting
Monday, 19 September 2016, 9.30 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

High-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants

Agenda items 13 and 117 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Co-Chair Thomson: Before we begin the list of speakers, I would like to turn to some organizational matters pertaining to the conduct of the plenary meeting.

In accordance with resolution 70/290, of 30 June 2016, the list of speakers was established on the basis that statements would have a time limit of up to four minutes. To assist speakers in managing their time, a light system has been installed at the speaker's rostrum. May I appeal to all speakers for their cooperation in observing the time limit of their statements, so that all those inscribed will be heard in a timely manner.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of Finland.

President Niinistö: I would like to start by expressing my gratitude to the Secretary-General for organizing today's meeting. The issue is of the utmost importance. More than 30,000 people are forcibly displaced every single day. Most of those flows originate from man-made conflicts. The scale of human suffering is heart-wrenching. We are facing ever-increasing needs for humanitarian assistance. The current United Nations humanitarian funding gap is $13.3 billion. Finland fully supports the initiative and leadership of the United Nations. I wish to express my appreciation for the dedication and professionalism of key agencies, particularly the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration, in their responses to the current crisis. Three interrelated issues warrant discussion.

First, people fleeing for their lives must be given adequate protection. I want to highlight the rights of refugee and migrant women and children. Promoting gender equality is a long-standing priority in Finland. Women and children are disproportionately affected when caught in large, uncontrolled migratory movements. Too many are subjected to violence and crimes, such as human trafficking. The rights of those vulnerable groups must be respected in all settings. In the spirt of leaving no one behind, Finland promotes the inclusion of persons with disabilities in development and humanitarian action. A recent step is the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, launched at the World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul in May. Finland spearheaded that initiative and encourages all stakeholders to endorse it.

Secondly, dealing with the present refugee and migration flows is not enough. We have seen only the beginning of this phenomenon. We must therefore urgently improve the management of the flows and deal with their root causes. We must increase our efforts to

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avert and resolve conflicts, prevent displacement and facilitate the voluntary and safe return of refugees. We need sustainable peace, economic growth and prospects for people in their home countries. A core issue is the promotion of human rights, the rule of law and good governance. Finland does that by, for example, supporting the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Finally, we must keep in mind that migration is not only a problem; it has always been one of the key factors in development. Orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration is a resource we cannot afford to waste. While we strive to prevent forced migration and to address the drivers of irregular migration, we appreciate that mobility can boost economic growth and reduce poverty. We call for all Member States to fully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in that regard.

I believe that none of us can forget the Yazidi woman whom we just heard saying,

"[w]e also deserve a life" (*A/71/PV.3, p. 11*).

Co-Chair Thomson: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of Mozambique.

President Nyusi: At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, for presiding over this high-level meeting on large movements of migrants and refugees, which is an opportunity for members of the international community to reflect and exchange ideas on how to address the complex challenges posed by the plight of refugees and migrants.

The phenomenon of refugees and migration is the consequence of deep development imbalances among countries. In Africa, and particularly in my country, Mozambique, the migration of the labour force is a current and historical reality.

Recognizing the importance of refugees and migrants and their impact on the economic, political, social and cultural life of our continent, Governments have taken steps to set up a strategic framework for African policies on refugees and migration. The overall objective of that strategic framework is to encourage African States to implement the integration of refugee and migration issues into their national and regional agendas through the development of national policies. That framework is intended to address a multitude of challenges, such as border problems threatening peace and security, the building of mechanisms to protect refugees and combat trafficking, and investing in human resource development so as to mitigate brain drain and promote regional integration cooperation and economic growth through infrastructure development.

Mozambique has a long history of labour migrating to such countries as South Africa, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Tanzania, Kenya and Yemen, among others. Guided by its experiences, knowledge, the spirit of solidarity and respect for the rights of refugees and migrants, Mozambique has hosted more than 23,000 asylum-seekers as a way of dealing with mixed immigration flows, in particular from the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region of Africa. Most of those peoples leave their countries of origin owing to natural disasters, economic hardship or political instability. Most recently, in mid-July 2015, following a military skirmish by Mozambique National Resistance armed elements, thousands of Mozambican citizens from Tete province sought shelter in Malawi. Fortunately, as the situation returns to normal, most of those citizens have returned home. More than 1,500 are reported to remain in Malawi. This has been possible due to the culmination of efforts by the Government of Mozambique, Malawi and the United Nations Office in Pretoria after appropriate procedures were followed, including the signing of a voluntary repatriation agreement. The Government of Mozambique remains committed to providing necessary monetary assistance to those citizens.

Co-Chair Thomson: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Raimonds Vējonis, President of the Republic of Latvia.

President Vējonis: I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to the Secretary-General for having convened this meeting. I welcome the agreement reached on the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1).

The global migration and displacement crisis has reached unprecedented levels and continues to grow. The scale of the problem is of the highest humanitarian concern. Addressing this phenomenon as it manifests worldwide is an enormous task. Political will and resources will be required on the part of all, and therefore shared global responsibility must be regarded as the underlying principle of our commitments today.

Our immediate attention must be focused on reinforcing our efforts to protect refugees, to support those hosting them and to develop safe and sustainable reception capacities close to their home countries. Latvia is working with other European Union (EU) member States to develop and implement a common EU policy on resettlement and humanitarian admission.

As Latvia participates in EU relocation and resettlement schemes, we remain mindful of the fact that countries cannot address migration challenges on their own.

These are global challenges that call for a global response. Latvia has supported and will continue to support efforts to strengthen the United Nations refugee response system.

It is our duty to ensure legal entry options for people who are in need of international protection. At the same time, States need adequate means to fight the abuse of existing systems and mechanisms. Furthermore, international border-management cooperation, as an important element of the security of States, is necessary.

Regular, safe and orderly migration can be achieved only through a comprehensive, coherent and long-term policy framework that addresses the drivers behind migration but also ensures the right of each country to determine whom to admit. A humane and effective return and readmission policy is integral and essential for a functional, comprehensive and sustainable migration policy.

The commitments undertaken today address mainly the consequences of migration flows from the Middle East and North Africa. However, we must not forget the root causes, and we must look further for long-term solutions. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted a year ago, is a great tool at our disposal to create conditions conducive to balanced, sustainable and inclusive development and contribute to the resolution and prevention of conflicts. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda is therefore crucial for tackling the root causes of large movements of migrants and refugees.

Let me conclude by reiterating our commitment to work together with States Members of the United Nations and other stakeholders to strengthen the governance of international migration. We are also certain that we must take this opportunity to create a more responsible and predictable system in order to respond effectively to large movements of refugees and migrants.

Co-Chair Thomson: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Michel Temer, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

President Temer (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): The images of children whose lives have been cut short by terror and conflict have appalled the world. The lives lost in the pursuit of survival in other countries impel us to reflect and, above all, to take action.

Almost 70 years ago, the Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that every person who suffers persecution has the right to seek shelter in other countries. It is high time to translate this right into concrete measures.

This is the first time that the Assembly has addressed issues related to refugees and migration together. We cannot close our eyes to the deep-rooted causes of these two phenomena. Only properly negotiated solutions to political crises and inclusive development for all will prevent the forced displacement of large numbers of people.

Let us be clear: the flows of refugees are the result of wars, repression and violent extremism, not their causes. The legitimate concerns of Governments for the security of their citizens must be fully in line with the rights that are inherent to every human being. If we forgo an uncompromising defence of these rights, we will by extension be forgoing our own humanity. In our relations with foreigners, with others, we ultimately test our loyalty to these values and our commitment to civilization itself.

Brazil is a country that built itself up on the strength of millions of people from all continents. We value our diversity. Immigrants have made, and continue to make, a significant contribution to our development. Furthermore, immigrants are an essential part of our own identity. At the Rio Olympics and Paralympics, we had the honour of welcoming the first delegation of refugees ever to compete in the Games.

In recent years, Brazil has welcomed more than 95,000 refugees from 79 different countries. We are keenly aware of the fact that welcoming refugees is a shared responsibility. We are engaged in refugee resettlement initiatives in our region, with special attention paid to the needs of women and children.

In our country, even before the recognition of their legal situation, refugees are given broad access to job opportunities and public services, including education and health care. We have worked with the United Nations to ensure that procedures are in place for the swift granting of refugee status.

We are also working with our Latin American brothers and sisters in the context of several initiatives to support refugees. In the Brazilian Parliament today, a new bill on migration is currently in its final stages of review. Our goal is to guarantee rights, foster greater inclusion and avoid criminalization of migrants. The new legislation will provide for humanitarian visas, a tool that has already been used in the past to help almost 85,000 Haitian citizens following the 2010 earthquake, as well as nearly 2,300 people affected by the Syrian conflict. At the very core of our policies is an unalienable recognition of the dignity that is inherent to all migrants.

We live in times that require boldness and courage. During the Second World War, Luiz Martins de Souza Dantas, then Brazilian Ambassador in Paris, took the initiative of issuing hundreds of visas to save the lives of persecuted European citizens. Souza Dantas acted out of a moral imperative, convinced that he was acting according to the values of Brazilian society. He was ahead of his time, and we must be ahead of ours.

Co-Chair Thomson: The General Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Li Keqiang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Over a month ago at the opening of the Rio Olympic Games, the world saw the first-ever refugee Olympic team. With their courage and perseverance, the athletes let the international community know that, while they are far from their homes and still moving from one place to another, they are still fighting for their hopes and dreams, for which they deserve our respect. At present, the issue of refugees and migrants has become more prominent, and this meeting today is the first of its kind aimed at addressing large movements of refugees and migrants since the founding of the United Nations. The international community is devoting great attention to this matter. I would like to share several observations.

First, the issue concerns peace and development in the world and affects regional stability. Large movements of refugees and migrants affect or trigger a series of political, social and security issues. Today, the number of refugees and migrants is surging at a rate and scale not seen in decades. That not only has an impact on the development of the countries concerned, while threatening regional peace and stability, but also hinders the recovery of the world economy, affects international order and creates opportunities for terrorists to exploit.

Although it concerns specific regions, migration is a global issue. No country can remain immune. The international community must react vigorously. The issue represents a humanitarian crisis that tests the human conscience. We are all living in the same global village, where every life is precious and the dignity of every person deserves to be protected. Many refugees suffer from hunger, disease and worse during their displacement. Many have gone missing or have lost their lives in the process, which is a serious shock to humankind's conscience. The spirit of humanitarianism must be promoted, and basic moral principles must not be compromised. The international community needs to help refugees, enable them to feel warmth and care once again, and rekindle their hope.

As we seek to tend to the migrant crisis in Europe, similar attention should also be paid to the disastrous situations in Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia and South Sudan, among other places. Addressing the issuerequires enhanced international cooperation. Efforts should be made to formulate and implement a comprehensive solution under the framework of the United Nations. It is important to ensure that Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration, which should fully play their coordinating roles. The principle of non-refoulement stipulated in the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees must be fully respected. Complex history and national circumstances must also be taken into account. All shareholders should shoulder its respective responsibilities.

Transit and destination countries need to fulfil their roles, based on their abilities. It is imperative to mobilize funds and relief so as to ensure coverage of the basic daily needs of refugees. It is equally vital to broaden the channel for legal migrants and to fight human trafficking and terrorist acts. Settlement will not be possible without the efforts of the countries of origin. Conflict, poverty and underdevelopment are the root causes of the refugee problem. The relevant parties need to resolve their disputes and disagreements

through dialogue and consultation. The international community should contribute to peace talks, promote inclusive growth and maintain social unity and stability.

China has always attached great importance to, and has taken an active part in, addressing these issues. We did what we could to help, even when China was poor. While China has made great progress with regard to its economy — and yet it is still a developing country — it is committed to shouldering its responsibilities commensurate with its abilities. That is an act of justice.

We would like to provide $100 million of humanitarian assistance to countries and international organizations, beyond the level of our previous aid. At the same time, we will consider taking further supportive measures. We will seriously consider devoting funds from the China-United Nations Peace and Development Trust Fund to support developing countries in their efforts to address the issue of refugees and migrants. We will actively explore trilateral cooperation with international institutions and developing countries.

China hopes that today's meeting will provide a new start to full consensus among parties and create new synergy that leads to an early, comprehensive and lasting solution to the problems raised by the large movements of refugees and migrants.

Co-Chair Thomson: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Nicos Anastasiades, President of the Republic of Cyprus.

President Anastasiades: At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General and the former President of the General Assembly, as well as the co-facilitators, the representatives of Ireland and Jordan, for their valuable work in preparing this high-level meeting.

In that respect, I wish to state that Cyprus fully and unwaveringly endorses the outcome document (resolution 71/1), which highlights our collective commitment to addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. We are facing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis, which is the consequence, on the one hand, of economic insecurity, poor standards of living and the lack of educational opportunities in those countries in which migratory flows are observed, and, on the other hand, of the ongoing turmoil, extremism, sectarianism, civil war and terrorism occurring in the Middle East, North Africa and other regions of the world. Therefore, addressing the root causes of large and long-term movements of refugees and migrants should be at the core of the international community's strategy.

First, we should focus our efforts so as to ensure that all those countries in need are turned into places in which sustainable development becomes a reality. Accordingly, our economic support should be well-targeted and results-oriented, so as to create the political and socioeconomic conditions that will deter people from migrating.

Secondly, we need to effectively promote regional peace in order to end ongoing conflicts and prevent future ones. In that respect, Cyprus is committed to cooperating with other partners and neighbours in creating effective partnerships in the eastern Mediterranean, thereby generating the necessary conditions for regional peace, security, stability and prosperity.

In parallel and in that connection, we should also jointly and comprehensively direct our efforts towards fighting human traffickers and the enablers of terrorism. The Republic of Cyprus is already carrying out actions based on the principle of shared responsibility. Most recently, in our capacity as a State member of the European Union, we accepted the resettlement of refugees in our country and introduced measures aimed at the recognition and protection of victims of trafficking, the prosecution and conviction of traffickers, the enhancement of bilateral cooperation on supporting refugees, and migration management.

As we wait for the relevant report of the Secretary-General at the seventy-first session, I would like to assure members that my country will work towards the effective implementation of the commitments made at today's high-level meeting. It is my firm belief that the achievement of those commitments, based on the principles of solidarity, shared responsibility and respect for human rights and dignity, will be an important indicator of the Organization's success and relevance. It will also be a demonstration of our political will and determination to respond to the expectations of our citizens for the benefit of humankind.

Co-Chair Thomson: The General Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Estonia, His Excellency Mr. Toomas Ilves.

President Ilves: Estonia welcomes the unique initiative by the Secretary-General that has made

it possible, for the very first time, for us, for the entire international community, to discuss refugee and migration issues in a single United Nations-led framework. This enables us to tackle the deficits in the global governance system on an issue that touches upon numerous policy areas with huge implications for security, stability and development around the world. It reminds us that the commitment and joint engagement by the international community have been there for many decades, namely, to act in a spirit of human dignity and in cooperation with each other in order to help vulnerable people escaping from war and terror, from political or social persecution, from poverty and hunger. But we need to commit to do more. Let us face it. This is not an unprecedented crisis. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency after the Second World War had to deal refugee flows of a larger order of magnitude than today. They committed up to $50 billion in today's dollars to do so. That is what we have to think about today.

But today we are talking about children, the most vulnerable, and I speak as the child of refugees. Around the world, the number of child refugees and migrants amounts to nearly 50 million children. In just 10 years, the number of child refugees has more than doubled, and it continues to grow. That shocking statistic shows that we need to commit to action. It is our duty to help children gain a foothold, protection, health and education — in other words, a normal life.

Estonia devotes special attention to the plight of child refugees and migrants, and is working towards strengthening child protection and integration measures in European and national legislative frameworks and practices, including education, health, social and legal services, as well as measures to combat discrimination and xenophobia.

Providing refugee and migrant children with an education and giving them equal access to various fields of social life and public services helps to build a safer and stronger society. Let me give some examples: first, in the refugee camp in Zaatar, Jordan, Estonia has equipped computer classes and provided computer lessons for primary schoolchildren in the camp. Secondly, local governments in Estonia have resettled Syrian refugees from Turkey or relocated refugees from Greece and have immediately ensured that all children, from the age of one-and-a-half to 17, are in enrolled in education, either in kindergarten, elementary or primary school.

We therefore believe that the practical steps and actions of Estonia and of other European Union member States address the main concerns and suggestions laid out by UNICEF in its latest report, entitled "Uprooted: the growing crisis for refugee and migrant children".

Mr. Nalbandian (Armenia), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

It is equally important to address the causes of conflict, violence and extreme poverty in countries of origin of the migration. In that context, the initiative of the European Union on a new migration partnership framework with third countries under the European agenda on migration is more timely than ever. Tailor-made migration compacts with the countries of origin, which are being developed and implemented in a spirit of mutual ownership, will contribute to peaceful conflict resolution, an advanced political, social and economic situation and to a better life for everyone.

The Acting Co-Chair: The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. William Ruto, Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya.

Deputy President Ruto: I commend the convening of this meeting, which sheds light on the plight of people in search of safety and dignity. I also wish to extend Kenya's gratitude to the Secretary-General for convening the World Humanitarian Summit in May this year. The Summit refocused the world's attention on the plight of refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons throughout the world.

We live in a world of unprecedented prosperity, technological advancement, expanded democracy and globalization, and yet, in spite of those milestones, we are experiencing the largest number of displaced persons since the Second World War. There cannot be a greater indictment of the international community than those incongruous realities.

Clearly, the framework designed to respond to human distress has become ineffectual. Throughout history, the development of the world has been predicated on the movement of people. And I say so with clarity, realizing that this great city of New York, this great country of the United States of America and many other cities and countries around the world are themselves a product of the movement of people and migration. In fact, as long as we have villages, towns and neighbourhoods that are unsafe, and as long as we have ravaging hunger and poverty, migration will

continue to be part of human history. In any case, migration itself and the movement of people is as old as humankind.

How is it that in the twenty-first century a phenomenon that has driven commerce and prosperity has now become subject to xenophobia driven by discrimination, persecution and inhumane treatment? How is it that the world is experiencing a steady decline in non-compliance with the principle of burden-sharing?

Since independence, Kenya has been host to hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons. Over many decades, we have evolved as a bastion of international solidarity in the protection and assistance of populations in distress. Today, as I address this meeting, Kenya is among the 10 countries in the world that are home to the largest population of refugees and displaced persons. In fact, the Dadaab Refugee Complex is the single-largest community of refugees anywhere in the world — with 400,000 people living in one complex.

As a result of our realization as a country of our commitment to the international community and our obligations, we have made a home and shared the resources that are available to the people of Kenya with hundreds of thousands of refugees who have come to our country. We have shared our water, infrastructure and electricity. Even though our environment is fragile and there has sometimes been competition between local communities and the refugees, we have continued to play a role in the international arena in ensuring that our population shares whatever we have with the refugees. I dare say that 170,000 refugees have landed in our institutions in Kenya. The law in Kenya mandates that every child should go to school. We share education facilities with our refugee brothers and sisters.

Let me also say that the Government of Kenya is working to realize its obligations to support its brothers and sisters in distress. It has contributed troops and equipment to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which was established in order to stabilize Somalia so that refugees can find a place to go back to and call home.

In conclusion, allow me to say that the Government of Kenya has also contributed $10 million in an arrangement between the Government of Kenya, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Government to Somalia to ensure a safe, orderly and humane return of refugees to Somalia.

The international community pledged $500 million to support that exercise. As I speak to the Assembly today, less than 1 per cent of that money has been deposited in five years. I wish therefore to remind the international community forcefully at this meeting that, now that we have adopted resolution 71/1, entitled "New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants", the international community has a debt to the people of Somalia, first, to support AMISOM so that we can continue to have safe areas where Somali refugees can go back to; secondly, to support the Government of Somalia so as to ensure that there is infrastructure enabling that country to support its citizens; and, thirdly, to support the orderly repatriation of refugees back home.

I hope that the international community will do as it has pledged under the New York Declaration.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Idriss Deby Itno, President of the Republic of Chad.

President Deby Itno (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for having convened this high-level meeting on large movements of refugees and migrants.

It should be recalled that this meeting comes on the heels of the World Humanitarian Summit, held four months ago in Istanbul. The Istanbul Summit, which focused on the theme of humankind as one entity with a shared responsibility, was an opportunity for the entire international community to renew its commitment to fully consider this thorny humanitarian issue. During the Summit, leaders from the entire world assumed their responsibilities to the peoples of the world by committing themselves to driving forward the Agenda for Humanity, which was established by the Secretary-General. Millions of men and, above all, women and children are victims of conflicts and natural disasters, which means that they have to leave their homes under terrible conditions. Africa is one of the theatres of such tragedies.

My country, Chad, aptly illustrates the humanitarian problem of today. Chad welcomes hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons fleeing hotbeds of tension. It should be noted that, after Kenya and Ethiopia, Chad has hosted the

most refugees, estimated at approximately 750,000 people from 2003 to today. In addition, there are also 130,000 Chadian returnees from the Central African Republic, who are still awaiting reintegration in their respective hosting areas on the national territory. We are one of the first countries to have ratified the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa. Chad is fulfilling its international commitments and, with the support of its partners, in particular the United Nations, the European Union and the International Organization for Migration, it has provided emergency assistance by hosting and providing the necessary protection to displaced persons, refugees and migrants.

With regard to refugees and displaced persons, after the crises in Darfur, the Central African Republic and Libya, Chad has experienced since 2015 new humanitarian situations as a result of the atrocities committed by Boko Haram. According to current information from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than 2,300,000 people are in need of assistance. The Government has responded to that situation by developing, together with its partners, a humanitarian response plan, which is based on three strategic objectives, namely, saving lives, strengthening resilience and analysing risks and vulnerabilities. The greatest challenge is the financing of the plan, whose budget is estimated to be $500 million. The lack of financing for the response plan is likely to lead to a greater number of people with acute food insecurity, a lack of appropriate health-care services, a risk of an outbreak of epidemics, a lack of access to education for more than 230,000 children, a lack of protection for more than 650,000 million displaced people and a lack of access to drinking water and sanitation facilities for displaced people and high-risk populations.

I would like to welcome the high-level visit of the delegation of the American Government, the European Union and the United Nations, which came to Chad in July in order to ease the tensions surrounding the acute humanitarian situation in the Lake Chad Basin. I also wish to see an urgent response by the international community aimed at helping people in the region in their efforts to address these crises.

While I welcome the adoption of resolution 71/1, on refugees and migrants, I would like to underscore the need to look seriously at the causes of this humanitarian situation, which are, among other things, insecurity, terrorism, poverty and climate change, and their corollaries, which are violence, instability and migration. Therefore, we must take action aimed at the root of the evil rather than limiting ourselves to addressing the consequences, which are always tragic in humanitarian terms.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

President Al Sisi (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate the Secretary-General for holding this meeting. I also commend the outstanding efforts undertaken in the previous session aimed at achieving the important objectives of addressing the large and unprecedented flows of migration together with their concomitant challenges.

I would like to underscore our national efforts aimed at maximizing the benefits of migration. We have put the relevant legislative frameworks at the top of our national priorities. The law regarding combating human trafficking was enacted in 2010. Egypt has strengthened its efforts to raise awareness of the risks associated with the illegal migration of young people and has taken steps to provide rehabilitation services for the young, in addition to efforts on the part of the security and armed forces aimed at preventing any attempt to smuggle migrants and at arresting criminal elements in order to subject them to applicable due process.

In accordance with our ongoing commitment and sense of responsibility, we are keen to participate in the relevant international organizations and institutions at the Arab, African and international levels, in particular through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration. We emphasize the development aspect and have refrained from closing borders, thereby protecting refugees in accordance with international rules. Proceeding from our ongoing commitment, we are bearing the burden of hosting huge numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers. As many as 5 million persons, registered and non-registered, have arrived. We are trying to provide them with decent living arrangements without placing them in shelters. Many refugees enjoy equal treatment as Egyptian nationals and are receiving shelter, housing and health-care services, despite the overburdened State budget.

We agree that combating illegal migration should be at the very top of our international priorities. There is no way to stop illegal migration without treating its

root causes. We must develop political solutions for the crises we see in the region, and not by closing borders, while remaining mindful of human rights law.

Migration is of value for the designated States of destination; migrants promote trade and commerce. We view with concern the increasingly alarming manifestations of xenophobia and racial discrimination against refugees and migrants in several places around the world. This often appears in the form of violent practices by some States, such as the confiscation of property or the targeting of refugee minors and women by extremist groups. If we fail to take care of their needs, we will be remiss in our duties.

We welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General and their call for exerting further efforts to enhance joint cooperation in support of economic development and political solutions, while creating a unified vision and providing refugees and migrants with decent living conditions, respecting their human rights and treating the main causes behind migration. It is high time for international action, and there is a need to build on the momentum. Once again, I would like to reiterate Egypt's commitment to supporting the efforts designed to address the issues of migration and asylum-seekers, and I call on the Assembly to enhance cooperation in support of economic development and to develop political solutions to the conflicts in the region, so that people will not be displaced in search of shelter.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Faiez Mustafa Serraj, President of the Presidency Council and Prime Minister of the Government of National Accord of Libya.

President Serraj (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting, which provides a historic opportunity to reach agreement on addressing the issue of large movements of refugees and migrants and ensuring respect for their human rights. Migration is a long-standing issue, and, as human beings, we have long migrated in search of resources and security. Today, we are witnessing an unprecedented level of human migration, giving rise to an increased need to offer protection and humanitarian assistance, which is due to deteriorating economic situations, the eruption of armed conflicts, the violation of human rights, natural disasters and environmental deterioration. We are alarmed at the large flows of illegal migration, where migrants are beset by dangers and some die when subjected to exploitation by the criminal networks that smuggle them.

Libya, as a transit State, is adversely affected by the migration phenomenon. It is facing challenges as a result of the inflows of illegal migration. Many of the migrants do not even have identification papers. A vast number of men, women and children are risking their lives in unsafe journeys throughout the Mediterranean region, heading to Europe, with the intention of leaving behind the insecurity and despair that they experience in their countries. Organized criminal networks have utilized the situation and aggravated insecurity in Libya. The challenges of illegal migration are challenges from which all States of the world are suffering. Therefore, tackling those challenges is not just the responsibility of Libya but requires regional and international efforts. Despite the difficulties faced by the Government of National Accord, it is trying its best to protect the rights of those refugees and combat the smuggling of and trade in such people. We would like to emphasize the preparedness of our Government to cooperate with all international efforts to prevent the loss of lives on the Mediterranean Sea and to deal with this humanitarian disaster and alleviate the suffering of illegal refugees, taking into consideration the need to respect the principles of international law and the sovereignty of States.

We are trying our best to return to the fold of the international family, so that we can coordinate with the international community and close the doors to the trade in death. That will be useful for the economy and the security of our State and neighbouring States, as well as Arab, African and European States. That will also help us to achieve reconstruction and to absorb millions of workers and attract global firms. We state, as a matter of principle, that illegal migration cannot be treated solely by security means. It can be treated effectively in the State of origin. That requires international efforts as well as concerted efforts by relevant States, which, in turn, requires helping them to improve their economic circumstances, which will be of use to their citizens. Developed States should help the developing States and provide official development assistance in cooperation and coordination with regional organizations.

We are meeting a year after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The implementation of that Agenda will help to address

many of the root causes of migration, eliminate poverty and activate international partnerships. We welcome the provisions of the Paris Agreement on climate change, which is designed to prevent many aspects of displacement resulting from climate change. We hope that this meeting will adopt applicable and enforceable resolutions aimed at stemming the flows of refugees, which can be achieved by sincere political will in the maintenance of international peace and security, as we seek to find an effective solution to the question.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Rosen Plevneliev, President of the Republic of Bulgaria.

President Plevneliev: Today's meeting gives us a unique opportunity to agree on a global approach to managing large-scale movements of refugees and migrants. Globally shared responsibility is vital. Common action on the part of the countries of origin, transit and destination should be undertaken in a spirit of mutual support and solidarity.

The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), which we adopted today, emphasizes our common objective of strengthening cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system. The establishment of a closer partnership between the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration is a timely and welcome decision. Bulgaria welcomes the valuable contribution of the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing, co-chaired by the Vice-President of the European Commission, Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, and His Royal Highness Sultan Nazrin Shah of Perak of Malaysia, highlighting the need for closer coordination between humanitarian and development action.

We cannot address the issue unless we resolve the root causes of migration. We need to find a lasting settlement to the conflicts and tackle human rights violations, difficult socioeconomic situations and the lack of good governance in the countries of origin. Respect for international humanitarian law and international human rights law, effective border management and readmission are key elements for managing migration. We welcome the strong reference in the New York Declaration to the full implementation of the existing readmission agreements.

The effectiveness of border controls remains of the utmost importance. That includes full respect for the human rights of asylum-seekers, preventing and combating irregular migration and migrant smuggling and eradicating human trafficking. It is vital to make a clear distinction between refugees and economic migrants, who are not eligible for refugee status. Many irregular migrants become victims of criminal networks and human trafficking when attempting to cross borders illegally.

Bulgaria strictly follows international humanitarian law and human rights law. Our capacity to provide protection has increased significantly. We are particularly committed to the protection of the most vulnerable, including women, children — especially unaccompanied children — and persons with disabilities. Bulgaria provides humanitarian and development assistance to countries of origin and transit. Bulgaria has already launched its first national resettlement programme and strongly supports the appeal to States that have not yet established resettlement programmes to consider doing so at the earliest opportunity.

By adopting the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework in the New York Declaration, we will be able to better protect and assist refugees and support host countries, while putting measures in place to respond to their legitimate security concerns. Future work towards the adoption of a global compact on refugees in 2018 will provide an important opportunity to integrate the prevention and tackling of root causes into the Comprehensive Framework.

My country is determined to participate in the forthcoming process of negotiations leading to the adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, which would set out a range of principles, commitments and understandings among Member States on international migration in all its dimensions.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President of the Republic of Costa Rica.

President Solís Rivera (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica enthusiastically welcomes the process that we have begun with the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) and its two annexes, which we have adopted today as an international community. The Declaration will enable us to deal with the challenges and provide the necessary means to ensure that refugees can rely on our support and trust and that their safety and dignity will be preserved during and after their journeys.

We welcome such global endeavours, in which we are all politically and morally obligated to contribute proportionally to finding a solution to the migration and refugee problem. It is essential that the responsibilities delegated and undertaken should correspond to the capacities and resources available. Close and coordinated cooperation among the countries of origin, transit and destination is necessary in order to provide mechanisms that will safeguard the security and dignity of migrants, thereby eliminating the many dangers they face throughout their journeys. In that connection, the most vulnerable are women and children, as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, to whom we must pay particular attention in terms of their protection.

Since its independence, in 1821, Costa Rica has been a nation of migrants. We have integrated them, and they have contributed to our society and its specific features, which they have enriched. However, in recent months we have become a country of transit for thousands of people, particularly Haitians coming from Brazil, whose end goal is to achieve a better standard of living.

The current situation is a complex one. The intensity and scale of those flows have meant that we have had to divert the already scarce resources of our country in order to help those people. That has inspired solidarity among our citizens, as well as the establishment of regional mechanisms to carefully safeguard and preserve the human rights and dignity of migrants.

Last year, all Member States undertook to leave no one behind in adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Hundreds of millions of people are currently living in countries that are not their own. Without their contributions and their inclusion in the development effort, it will prove impossible to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The economic empowerment of women also requires special attention in that context; it is important to include migrant women and consider their particular needs. That is not only a necessity but also a very intelligent thing to do, in relation to the age-old struggle against violence, discrimination and gender stereotyping that still prevail in our societies.

We are pleased to say that we recently adopted the San José Action Statement, which establishes measures to deal with the growing phenomenon of mixed migratory movements, including the forced displacement of those fleeing violence and exploitation as a result of organized crime groups in the northern triangle of Central America.

We wish once again to say that we welcome such endeavours to strengthen global governance regarding migration, and today we welcome the cooperation agreement signed by the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration, the work and dedication of which we are very grateful for.

We must persevere in those matters, and therefore we support the continuation of the high-level dialogue on migration and development, as well as its realization before 2019. Lastly, I wish to express my congratulations for the efforts aimed at the adoption of a global compact on refugees and a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration in 2018.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States.

President Peña Nieto (*spoke in Spanish*): Migrants symbolize the force that has created human progress, namely, movement. The great migrations have taken the human species to the various corners of the Earth in all historical epochs. Throughout time, traditions and ideas, knowledge and technological progress, values and aspirations have travelled with migrations. Cultures are revitalized and enriched when they coexist and dialogue takes place among them. Migrants have been their primary voices. History shows that there are no barriers that can stop either the movement of people and the fusion of cultures or the dissemination of ideas. Neither natural nor artificial barriers hold sway. For every river, there has always been a bridge; for every obstacle, there has always been a way forward. Movement is an essential part of being human, because it reflects an instinct for survival, vital energy and an ardent desire to excel and transcend. Migrants' contributions to the various host societies are undeniable, because all migrants are accompanied by their hope and their identity, their energy and their talent.

Mexico is an example of that. We are a country of origin, transit, destination and return for people. We are a proudly mestizo, multicultural and diverse nation, with a living and vibrant culture that is the fruit of many migrations throughout our history. We Mexicans firmly believe that such mestizo fusion is the future and destiny of humankind. That is why Mexico

welcomes the first high-level meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants at the United Nations. Today's meeting proves that mindsets are also mutable. We must place migrants and their rights, dignity and well-being at the centre of the global dialogue. Mexico will continue participating actively in multilateral forums to devise a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration and a global compact of responsibility-sharing for refugees in 2018.

We believe that such guiding documents should take the following principles into account: first, the use of a human rights approach that sets forth States' obligations to migrants; second, a vision for shared responsibility among the migrants' countries of origin, transit, destination and return; third, the recognition of migrants' contributions to social and economic development; fourth, a focus on social inclusion that contributes to eradicating intolerance, prejudice and racism; fifth, a framework to govern migration that offers alternatives for the safe and orderly management of migratory flows; sixth, greater international cooperation to strengthen States' capacities to devote comprehensive attention to migration, and, seventh, the consideration of climate change and natural phenomena as causes of migration. In order to make progress in achieving such objectives, my country has offered to host an international preparatory meeting in 2017.

Mexico will continue working to have migrants recognized as agents of change and development, so as to ensure that their human rights are respected and to eliminate statements of hate and discrimination against migrants. The international community can improve the situation faced by migrants. We have not yet honoured the commitment that we made to migrants. We must shoulder our responsibility, because migration is not just humankind's past and present; it is also its future.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. David Granger, President of Guyana.

President Granger: The Cooperative Republic of Guyana welcomes the convening of today's high-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants. The meeting offers the international community an opportunity to commit to a comprehensive solution to a complex and chronic problem. The refugee and migrant crisis confronting the world today presents grave challenges to the international community. Images and accounts of men, women and children who are forced to flee their homes and homelands in search of safety are transmitted daily and graphically by mass and social media. The international community can no longer ignore the plight of those desperate refugees and migrants. Their condition and situation demand a commitment to address both the root causes as well as the human consequences that accompany the refugee and migrant crisis.

Conflicts within and among States are mainly responsible for most of the mass movements of refugees and migrants that we are witnessing in the world today. Refugees and migrants are, however, not the only ones affected. Conflicts between States, if left unattended or unresolved, can escalate into regional and even global crises that can threaten the existence of larger numbers of persons in wider areas, even beyond their countries' borders. The root causes of conflicts around the world that have spawned the refugee and migrant crisis must be addressed. Conflict prevention and conflict resolution must be part of the global response to the crisis of refugees and migrants. The international community has a responsibility to prevent such conflicts and to usher in an era of security and the preservation of peace between States.

Natural disasters have also been a cause of the refugee and migrant crisis. The global community must not ignore the impact that catastrophic natural disasters, including those caused by climate change, have had in triggering mass destruction, which produces refugees and migrants. Guyana is a member of the Caribbean Community. Six years ago, we were overwhelmed by the death, disease, dislocation and destruction inflicted on the Caribbean State of Haiti, a sister member of our Community. The Haitian earthquake left thousands of persons dead and consigned thousands of others to a life of being refugees in their own country. Haiti's agony is being compounded today by the creation of new waves of refugees from the Dominican Republic.

The New York Declaration on large movements of refugees and migrants (resolution 71/1) offers a path towards addressing the problem of large movements of refugees and migrants in a more coherent and comprehensive manner. The Declaration must be backed, however, by the determination of the United Nations to bring an end to international terrorism and inter-State and intra-State conflicts that are active, incipient and latent. Guyana supports the protection of the rights of all migrants. Guyana welcomes the process

that today's meeting will initiate for the convening in 2018 of an intergovernmental conference on international migration with a view to the adoption of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. Guyana intends to play an active role in that process. We intend to ensure that the root causes of conflict are eliminated and that peace will prevail in the world.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta.

Mr. Muscat (Malta): I speak here today as the leader of a country that is European and situated at the centre of the Mediterranean Sea. We have, over a number of years, seen at first hand the refugee and migration crisis unfolding in our seas. Malta, being on a main migratory route from sub-Saharan Africa towards Europe, is no stranger to migration and refugee flows. To date, our country continues to receive a high number of asylum applications, which, given our small size and limited resources, have proved to be a major challenge. Given that direct experience, Malta has placed migration as a core area within its foreign policy and has long recognized the importance of tackling migration jointly as a community of States.

Despite the fact that we are already host to a number of refugees and persons receiving international protection, my country, as a member of the European Union (EU), has nonetheless subscribed to the plan to relocate asylum-seekers from Italy and Greece, and has made further pledges under the intra-EU relocation mechanism, because we believe firmly that the management of Europe's external borders is a collective duty that should be based on the principles of shared responsibility, mutual trust and solidarity. In that regard, the choice is either that of lurching from one crisis to the next and seeking short-term remedies, or of working towards a solution that has at its core the principle of solidarity with fellow human beings and all States, particularly countries of transit and destination.

The challenge we face is one requiring collective action, long-term strategies and comprehensive approaches. Those three core principles — coupled with a holistic approach that protects the vulnerable yet seeks to curb migrant smugglers, who are criminals and should be treated as such — should guide our endeavours to address that shared challenge. At the same time, we, the global community, should intensify our support to the countries of origin, transit and destination through enhanced cooperation on development and well-managed migration policies. Once implemented, such policies can help to offer migrants a better life in their own home countries and more sustainable management of the biblical-level migratory flows that we are seeing.

Migration is increasingly intertwined with human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants. It is appalling that many people escaping from conflict, persecution or misery fall into the hands of organized criminal networks that take advantage of their vulnerability and undermine security, both within and beyond the States concerned. One way to counter such crimes is by establishing and strengthening national programmes, along with regional and international cooperation. We should also consider bringing people-smugglers to justice in international courts.

Much of what should and can be done to address the root causes of migration and forced displacement can be found in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which most of my colleagues have mentioned and which duly recognizes the strong link between development and migration. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda has given us the tools to try to make a difference. Its various Goals address comprehensively, and in a cross-cutting manner, the different facets that can become push factors in migration and forced displacement. Sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection, as well as the goals of reducing inequality within and among peoples and countries and working to achieve orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility, are especially important. Those are goals that we all share. In that regard, I also believe that the private sector is a valuable, key actor that should be brought into the equation in order to further encourage an environment conducive to investment that can help to increase employment possibilities and provide better opportunities at home for potential economic migrants. We need to maximize opportunities for refugees and internally displaced persons.

The acute migration situation that has developed in Europe over the past year has brought to the fore the importance of devoting equal effort to both the internal and the external dimensions of migration. The European Union has taken several steps over the past year to scale up its work with external partners. Its leaders, gathered at the Valletta summit meeting on migration held in Malta in 2015, endorsed an action plan outlining 16 priority actions that they have committed themselves

to implementing by the end of this year, thus tackling migration and forced displacement in a comprehensive and holistic approach. The Valletta summit also led to the creation of a trust fund, consisting of an initial €1.8 billion, for financing projects to be implemented under the various thematic areas. Progress on that implementation will be assessed early next year when senior officials meet again in Malta.

In order to prevent the unacceptable losses of life in the Mediterranean Sea and bring order to migration and refugee flows, the European Union has also been working on a new partnership framework aimed at mobilizing every possible policy and tool to achieve shared objectives with third countries. The new approach builds on the outcomes of the Valletta summit, and while we should retain its focus on saving lives, we should also do more to dismantle trafficking networks.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, President of Faso and President of the Council of Ministers of Burkina Faso.

President Kaboré: On behalf of the delegation of Burkina Faso and speaking for myself, I welcome today's high-level meeting on mass displacements of refugees and migrants, which is one of the major challenges of our time. To begin with, we commend the Assembly's adoption this morning (see A/71/PV.3) of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), which demonstrates our shared willingness to seek ways and means today to seal a global compact for dealing with the issue more effectively and humanely, including balancing the delicate question of national borders with the need to respect the basic rights of refugees and migrants.

Population movements are a universal historical phenomenon that, from time to time and for various reasons — including the quest for a decent standard of living and better way of life — has always been part of the life of human society. It is a natural, legitimate desire — more than that, it is a fundamental human right. Our analysis and proposals for solutions to the migration issue will therefore have a chance of prospering and producing the desired results only when measured against that yardstick. If we are to cooperate effectively to halt or better control mass flows of refugees and migrants, we must identify and eliminate the underlying causes. Poverty, misery, unemployment and underemployment, inequality, exclusion, discrimination of every kind, intolerance and large-scale violations of dignity and human rights make for fertile ground for the mass exodus of whole populations. To that must be added, sadly, natural disasters, environmental degradation and the ever-deepening chasm between the developed and developing worlds. We must work together in strict respect for international human rights and humanitarian law. Above all, we must focus our efforts, individual and collective, on the implementation and follow-up strategies of the Sustainable Development Goals, backed up by an approach based on shared responsibilities and active international solidarity.

I would like to strongly reaffirm that when refugees and migrants are welcomed humanely and treated with respect and dignity, they can in fact make a significant contribution to the development of their communities, in the countries that receive them as well as in their countries of origin, and at the same time help to bring their peoples and nations closer together. Any instrument of control that does not take that aspect into account is inevitably destined to fail. That is why we must strengthen and, if necessary, adapt our legal instruments and institutional frameworks at the national, regional and international levels.

To date, with the support of partners such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, my country has been able to render all the necessary assistance to the 33,000 displaced Malians whom it has welcomed across its borders and whom it has officially recognized as refugees, in accordance with its international commitments. With almost one third of its population living abroad, Burkina Faso rightly appreciates the contribution of immigrants to national development and to a rapprochement among peoples. It has therefore invested in a policy of mutually beneficial cooperation with host countries that are striving domestically to create the necessary conditions for the effective participation of the diaspora in social and political life and in domestic development efforts. That is why a national strategy for migration is being developed, namely, in order to make migration from Burkina Faso's territory safer, more regulated and orderly.

Refugees and migrants should no longer be perceived as threats, but should instead be treated as a source of opportunity for themselves and for their host countries and countries of origin, as well as for

the international community as a whole. We, as leaders, have the individual and collective responsibility to strive towards that goal. I trust that we shall be successful.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Tammam Salam, President of the Council of Ministers of the Lebanese Republic.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon): The world is witnessing the worst-ever crisis of forced population displacement in history, along with everything that that drama entails, including suffering, misery, criminality and the abuse of human rights and dignity. In short, the crisis is destroying people's destinies. That poses serious problems for our stability, security, economy and public services. Moreover, the situation is becoming more dramatic by the day, which does not bode well for the future of our country and for our future generations.

Since the beginning of the crisis, in 2011, over 100,000 Syrian babies have been born in Lebanon, with over 50 per cent of them born in the last 18 months. Today, the number of Syrians being born in Lebanon is greater than the number being resettled in other countries, fuelling a perilously destabilizing trend of internal growth. It is unthinkable that Lebanon could alone cope with an existential challenge of such a proportion. This cannot continue.

I am sure that you will agree, Sir, that, barring a massive intervention from the international community, Lebanon runs the risk of serious collapse. I should like to use this forum to appeal to the world, and especially to the United Nations, to urgently put in motion a plan comprising the following steps.

First, within three months, we need to draft a detailed logistical mapping for the safe and dignified return to Syria of the Syrians currently in Lebanon, specifying transportation requirements, departure locations and all associated costs. The fundraising process required for that plan should be started immediately. That will enable, when circumstances permit, its swift implementation. Secondly, we need to set up burden-sharing quotas for countries, both in the region and elsewhere, and to negotiate the enactment of resettlement efforts before the year's end. Thirdly, we must intensify the financing of development projects at both the local and the regional levels. Fourthly, we must arrange for reliable reporting on effective payments made by donors, organized by sector. Fifthly, we must launch a fundraising effort in favour of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to enable it to address vital humanitarian needs, ensure the sustainable pursuit of its educational programmes and complete the reconstruction of the Nahr-el Bared Palestine Refugee Camp.

My country is in serious danger. What the Lebanese have done by harbouring 1.5 million Syrians in their country with a population of 4 million Lebanese is unprecedented. What the Lebanese have done by spending close to $15 billion that they do not have, in three years, to service the displaced Syrian population, is unprecedented. What the Lebanese have done by maintaining stability and order and safeguarding security, using means that they do not have, is unprecedented. What the Lebanese have done in order to ensure education for almost as many Syrian children as their own is unprecedented. What the Lebanese have experienced by, on occasion, being denied hospital beds because they are occupied by displaced Syrians is unprecedented. What the Lebanese have done by strictly clamping down on smuggling people to European shores is unprecedented.

My question is, when is the world going to assist Lebanon during these dire times? When is the United Nations going to rise to the task and significantly rally efforts to help refugees and migrants, in observance of its number-one responsibility, which is to safeguard peace and security?

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Donald Tusk, President of the European Union.

President Tusk (European Union): The European Union welcomes this ambitious initiative, as no other global problem is more urgent today than the ongoing migration of millions of people. The United Nations still needs to reinforce its tools and find the money to deal with the humanitarian needs and other problems triggered by the current unprecedented wave of migration. There is a lot of catching up to do. We hope that the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) will mark a new pragmatic approach and a shift towards a global system where movement is more orderly, the responsibility is shared and no one bears the burden alone.

The Assembly must know that today the European Union has a clear objective, namely, to restore order at its external borders. That will lead to a further

reduction of irregular flows to the European Union. There will be no repeat of the year 2015, when more than 1.5 million irregular migrants travelled to the Union. At the same time, we are ready to increase humanitarian and development assistance for refugees, internally displaced persons and closed communities. Our new initiatives are already under way. We are finalizing compacts with Jordan and Lebanon, with the aim of providing an appropriate and safe environment for refugees and displaced persons from Syria, in exchange for additional European Union funds. We are also setting up new partnership agreements with African countries. Moreover, we are determined to continue our cooperation with Turkey and with the Western Balkans. In all of those concerns — the need to strengthen the European Union's external borders and to increase financial assistance for those in need — I want to underline that European Union member States stand united. That was confirmed at our informal meeting of the 27 heads of State or Government in Bratislava three days ago.

Global migration will accompany us in the future, and it is in our power to decide what our future will be in that context — whether it will be orderly, stable and safe or disorderly, unstable and unsafe. We need the political will, responsibility-sharing and practical cooperation of all players, and not two years from now, but here and now. Our discussion today gives me hope that we can make it happen.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Muhammad Jusuf Kalla, Vice-President of the Republic of Indonesia.

Mr. Kalla (Indonesia): For centuries, migration has been a natural phenomenon where people travelled across boundaries to seek a better future. Today, we are witnessing an unprecedented flow of helpless migrants with more complex motives for migration — conflicts, wars and social unrest in many parts of the world have forced people to leave their homes. In an extreme example, we have witnessed the international community standing idle while countless migrants drown in the Mediterranean Sea. That is intolerable. We must work together to ensure that such humanitarian tragedies are prevented from occurring again in the future.

Even though Indonesia is not a party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, we continue to open our arms and provide humanitarian assistance to those in need. Currently home to almost 14,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, Indonesia is working together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration to provide temporary shelters and facilitate refugee processing, particularly through repatriation and resettlement programmes.

In the past, we have provided humanitarian assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers. Between 1969 and 1975, we took in over 250,000 refugees and asylum-seekers fleeing from internal conflicts in countries in the region, such as Viet Nam. We dedicated an island to the establishment of the Galang refugee camp, which processed such refugees and asylum-seekers for over 20 years. However, today the challenge of addressing refugees and asylum-seekers is much different from our experience back in 1975.

Today, a holistic approach is necessary in dealing with the multidimensional phenomenon of irregular migration. Preventive measures and efforts to address the root cause are key. In that context, every country, every Government is responsible for maintaining an enabling environment for those people. Indonesia initiated the Bali process in order to holistically address people-smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transitional crime. The Bali process essentially enables countries and agencies to undertake burden-sharing and shared responsibility in addressing large movements of irregular migrants. However, let me make it clear that burden-sharing and taking collective action does not mean that we share equitable international obligations under the Convention.

This challenge is too big for any country or agency to handle alone. Better and more inclusive international cooperation is necessary. That is particularly true as demographic change has driven countries to look for productive labour forces and to find incentives for people to move beyond borders to find a better life. In order to address the distressing phenomenon of such increased migration, a drastic overhaul of our whole system is required, globally, regionally and nationally.

Globally, we are attempting at this meeting to reduce the world gap and to reconcile a particular source of distrust among countries. Regionally, we must stop external interference and create a more conducive setting for cooperation and empower regional organizations to play a greater part in managing the situation. At the national level, we must maintain security and stability,

as well as create opportunities for the employment of people. In that regard, Indonesia will develop a road map with a view to achieving a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

Indonesia fully welcomes the recognition by the high-level meeting of the multidimensional aspects of migration, particularly the positive economic contributions of migrants to the countries of origin, transit and destination. Indonesia also believes that, in order to achieve a better outcome, the commitment to ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development must be fulfilled. That is why we first sought ratification of the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

Finally, Indonesia sincerely hopes that this meeting will result in a real improvement over time aimed at preventing more individuals from losing their lives on their migration journeys, saving those in need of humanitarian assistance and ending the suffering of millions of migrants in faraway shelters.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark.

Mr. Rasmussen (Denmark): We are gathered here today to join forces so that all of us can look for answers to the complex challenges that we are facing. And I can assure the General Assembly that Denmark takes global responsibility. We spend 0.7 per cent of our gross national income on development assistance, and in the European Union, Denmark takes more than its fair share of asylum-seekers. Denmark is constantly among the top five humanitarian donors per capita. Other countries are encouraged to do the same, because we must act together.

It is my firm belief that the best way to deal with today's enormous refugee and migration challenges is to prevent violent conflicts in the first place, so that we prevent people from being forced to take up long and dangerous journeys. The circumstances associated with migration and asylum-seeking entail unbearable human suffering. They also put pressure on local communities receiving people in search of protection or a better future. That applies especially to countries that host many refugees.

It is essential to balance the needs of the local populations with the needs of refugees and migrants. Millions worry that the pressure of migration will make their communities collapse, and we must listen to them as well. The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) is an important step forward. I would like to underline three central principles.

First, we must operate within an international framework founded on human rights. We must preserve the obligation to provide protection to refugees, and we must distinguish between migrants and refugees, in order to not undermine the protection of those who need it the most. If we do not join forces to deal with illegal and irregular migration, we are putting our international regime for protection at risk. The Refugee Convention is intended for those in real need of protection.

Secondly, the root causes of refugee and migrant movements must be addressed through peacebuilding and long-term development. That is the only long-term solution. Thirdly, all States have a sovereign right to decide whom to admit to their territory, and all States must live up to their obligation to readmit their own nationals. If they do not, fewer people in actual need will get support.

We stand ready to use all relevant foreign policy tools to help countries live up to that obligation. For this year, 2016, and the next year, Denmark intends to increase humanitarian assistance to record levels of more than $350 million annually. This fall, we already expect to add $80 million to help refugees from Syria, Iraq and communities in the neighbouring countries, as well as in other places like Libya, where many are fleeing conflicts. We will help host countries manage and cope with the large burdens. We will support transit countries in their fight against the trafficking in and smuggling of human beings. We must put the migrant smugglers out of business. We must join forces to achieve the goal of well-managed migration and the protection of refugees, because we wish to preserve our ability to assist those in real need of protection.

The Acting Co-Chair: The General Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic.

Mr. Tsipras (Greece): I would like to warmly thank the Secretary-General for today's important initiative and the support of the United Nations to Greece. The large movement of refugees and migrants is a global challenge that no State can face alone. Either we will

manage to face it collectively, comprehensively and on the basis of our values, or we will fail. What is worse is that today we risk not only failing to face the challenge, but also betraying our values in the process. Nowhere is that more evident than in Europe, a Europe shaken by the biggest migratory pressures since the Second World War and by the effects of poverty, suppression and war in its broader neighbourhood, a Europe that is asking itself whether it is still possible to preserve social cohesion and security for its citizens without violating international law and, in particular, the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

The people of Greece, confronted by a deep economic crisis, have faced this challenge every day for the past year and a half and our response is, "Yes, it must be possible". We faced it when 1.2 million migrants entered our country. We faced it when, through the unilateral steps of others, our northern borders were closed. We face it as we try, with the help of the European Union (EU) and the United Nations authorities, to support the nearly 60,000 migrants stranded in Greece and the new ones coming.

Our asylum service, which did not exist three years ago, is dealing with the fourth-largest number of asylum applications in Europe. Together with the Turkish and European authorities, we are trying to implement the very difficult, but necessary, EU-Turkey agreement, which has led to a radical decrease in the flows and, most importantly, in the number of deaths in the Aegean Sea. The new agreement is replacing the regular dangerous route to Europe with a legal one based on resettlement.

The challenges facing Greece are many, including strengthening the protection of borders and enhancing asylum procedures, but they can work only on the basis of shared responsibility and solidarity. We need the promises made to Greece to be kept; we need many more European asylum officials to support our asylum service, and many more relocations of refugees from Greece to other European countries. At the same time, we need to enhance cooperation with Asian and African countries of origin and transit, in order, for instance, to ensure the return of people not in need of international protection. If we do not agree in today's Declaration to make strong efforts to replace dangerous migration routes with legal ones, if we do not address the root causes of migration, if we do not accelerate the resettlement of refugees to countries around the world that can host them, we will fail. And, what is worse, we will provide a space where nationalistic, xenophobic forces can show their face. For the first time since the Second World War they will show their face.

In Greece today the challenge of humane and effective refugee and migration management is being tested. If we, the international community, fail to support that effort, the social and political repercussions will be felt not only in Greece, but everywhere.

The Acting Co-Chair: The General Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Giorgi Kvirikashvili, Prime Minister of Georgia.

Mr. Kvirikashvili (Georgia): The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was launched one year ago from the tribune of the United Nations with the pledge that no one would be left behind. With that statement, the States Members of the United Nations committed themselves to address the consequences of a migrant crisis that was already leaving millions stranded. Yet forced displacement has only increased since then, with a staggering 300 million international migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons registered this year. Against that backdrop, conflicts and insecurity in parts of Africa and the Middle East continue to drive mass exoduses, and the death toll of migrants crossing borders continues to climb. Millions globally are still at risk of being left behind.

The burden of forced displacement has not bypassed Georgia. Since the early 1990s, the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali/South Ossetia have witnessed several waves of ethnic cleansing under the occupation by the Russian Federation. Approximately 400,000 persons have been forcibly displaced — while Georgia's entire population totals only 4 million. Prospects for their safe return are grim, with the ongoing installation of barbed-wire fences along the occupation line. Meanwhile, ethnic Georgians in the occupied territories continue to suffer from daily discrimination.

Co-Chair Thomson took the Chair.

It is simply not possible to turn a blind eye to that problem and to what is going on worldwide. In the struggle Georgia is committed to pulling its weight. We have already received more than 4,000 asylum-seekers from various parts of the world such as Ukraine, Iraq, Syria, Nigeria, Egypt and Somalia. Georgian universities offer educational programmes for students from displaced communities. We are committed to continuing our assistance in the educational sphere,

together with interested partners, including donor countries and organizations that can provide financial support to that initiative.

The International Organization for Migration, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international agencies have made immense efforts to alleviate the plight of the victims. But the gravity of the situation requires a coordinated political response. The situation now is unprecedented. We need to address the root causes of forced displacement to ensure that the situation does not get out of control. We need to be proactive rather than reactive, prevent the escalation of conflicts and preclude further waves of displacement. The question is: where do we start?

Violations of international law are one of the root causes of conflicts. If we can ensure that all actors abide by the law and strictly observe their commitments, we can start to move towards a more peaceful world. We can start to prevent crises and the mass exodus that ensues as a result of the millions affected.

At the Istanbul World Humanitarian Summit this May, we committed to promoting a new approach and supporting the emergence of safe, dignified and durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons. The right to safe return is a basic human right, and it must be guaranteed irrespective of political differences.

Let me reiterate in closing that Georgia will continue to contribute to international efforts in addressing large movements of migrants and refugees, regardless of our small size or our own security challenges.

Co-Chair Thomson: The General Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Mr. Bettel (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): We are facing a global migratory phenomenon of enormous scale today. The challenge is all the more important as it is we, the political leaders, who must find a balance between humanitarian needs and the necessity of finding medium- and long-term solutions.

There are many reasons for migration. There is not one single reason, or one single solution. In addition to the increasing number of conflicts in the world today, we must take account of the major trends of the century: the exponential demographic increase in certain areas of the world, climate change and rapid changes in technology, which also call for greater and more fluid mobility. Any quest for a durable, flexible and dignified solution, and any consideration aimed at better understanding and responding to situations of migration can be successful only if we join forces.

The meeting convened for today is a positive step forward, perhaps just a step, but in the right direction. It cannot be an isolated occurrence, and the commitments undertaken in this context must be followed up on. We must make clear to our citizens that a global crisis requires global responses, through, namely, shared responsibility and trans-border solidarity.

(*spoke in English*)

We cannot walk alone.

(*spoke in French*)

Such solidarity can be shown by hosting migrants or displaced persons, by financial assistance or through support in the form of human or material resources. It seems to me that each State should contribute to the extent that it can, on the basis of its gross domestic product and its population, with respect to all aspects of such solidarity.

Here let us recall that approximately eight of 10 migrants are from developing countries and that most of them are being hosted in developing countries, sometimes by the most disadvantaged communities, which nevertheless find the means to help others even though they themselves might be among the most vulnerable, as, for example, around Lake Chad. This situation shows the importance of attacking the root causes of migration and combating poverty. An increase in the resources allocated to humanitarian assistance is essential to save lives and must be rapidly complemented by assistance for development that meets the requirements of complex and prolonged crises. Educating the children of migrants and refugees must be our priority in this context.

By allocating 1 per cent of gross national income to cooperation and development, Luxembourg is contributing to eradicating poverty. Action to provide basic social services to a population and action to assist countries to educate all of its children and to keep them in school beyond primary education is the right thing to do.

However, we must create opportunities for the future. Economies must develop, attract investment and

prosper so as to create jobs. Humanitarian assistance and development cooperation cannot be our only responses. Other initiatives must be taken, and the Valletta summit is an excellent example. The work done in that respect by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration must be commended. In certain States, it is the lack of prospects that lead to economic migration. Would it not be useful, perhaps, to consider the simplification of certain rules of legal migration so as to allow for orderly and controlled flows, rather than leaving their management in the hands of criminal networks?

Migration is a historical and human phenomenon. Most States here, including mine, are witnessing or have witnessed migration, be it as a destination, origin or transit country. We cannot forget that waves of migration have left historical traces, and that due to these migratory flows, some would incite xenophobia, racism and violence.

Lastly, I hear some of these voices growing louder, which is giving fuel to certain populist parties at the European and even international levels. Some are introducing, sneakily, fear of the "other" into the political discourse. Today this approach is meeting with success, as the recent elections in Europe have shown. But this is a reality, and we as democrats have a problem. We must give complicated answers to simple questions, while populist movements have it easy: to the most difficult questions they give the most simplistic responses. Are they fair, legal or achievable? They do not care. They are looking for the quickest way to get their listeners to acquiesce quickly, without any focus on prospects or the future.

So let us remain democrats. Let us not forget our history and, above all, let us not allow populists to fuel the fears of the people that are listening to them and to whom no other solutions are being presented. We must send a strong message and show that we are coordinated and that we have responses and solutions. We must do more than speak about this; we must also take action.

Co-Chair Thomson: The General Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Milo Đukanović, Prime Minister of Montenegro.

Mr. Đukanović (Montenegro) (*spoke in Montenegrin; interpretation provided by the delegation*): I wish at the outset to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for having convened this high-level meeting devoted to this important topic.

Close coordination at the international level with a leading role played by the United Nations is an indispensable element in speaking with a single voice in response to this humanitarian crisis. The problem of refugees and migrants is a global issue. Although Europe, due to its geopolitical position, has throughout history been the most open and vulnerable to the consequences of conflicts in the Middle East, Asia and Africa, it has traditionally been an indispensable witness of the processes in which people find themselves fleeing from war or poverty. It is a common observation that after the Second World War there were no migratory flows such as those we are seeing today. That is true, but it also holds true that today there exist powerful international organizations whose mechanisms must be used in dealing with such complex political and humanitarian challenges. Responsibility for assistance to and admission of refugees and migrants must be more equitably shared.

Montenegro knows very well what a humane approach and moral and political responsibility and solidarity mean. Even as part of a joint State with modest capacities during the bloody dissolution of Yugoslavia, as the only republic that preserved peace and multi-ethnic harmony, it left its borders wide open to all the people who were fleeing the horrors of war. At one point we had more than 120,000 refugees, which represents a fifth of our population. In recent years, 15,000 refugees and displaced persons from the region have been integrated into Montenegrin society. We have done a lot to resolve their housing issues, especially as concerns the most vulnerable categories. Participation in the regional housing programme, funded mainly through European Union (EU) funds, within which we provided funding for housing for more than 6,010 displaced persons and Roma people, was generally helpful. The value of this project is around €28 million, while the contribution of Montenegro amounts to 15 per cent.

Montenegro has not been directly affected by the current migration rates to date. However, we have taken the necessary measures for the potential admission of migrants and refugees in the event of a sudden influx, in accordance with all international standards. Among other things, we prepared the draft Schengen action plan, which, in addition to dealing with issues of water safety in line with Schengen standards, will adequately

incorporate and develop plans for the control and prevention of irregular migration and asylum crises. As a country that is in negotiations for membership in the EU, Montenegro welcomes the definition of the new strategic framework of the EU in the field of foreign and security policy, which, inter alia, points out that the European Union will be committed in future to strengthening the relevant agencies and addressing the causes of the migrant crisis with full adherence to human rights and international law.

We also welcome the July 2016 EU Migration Partnership Framework initiative, which launched a new set of actions to address the causes of the migrant crisis. We also welcome the agreement reached between the European Union and Turkey in March this year. The best way to respond to displacement is to address the root causes of the problem through the prevention and resolution of conflicts by political means in a sustainable and lasting way, as well as through the strengthening of institutions and the rule of law, the eradication of poverty and the strengthening of social, economic and political inclusion and perspectives. All of that is much easier said than done, but we must strive towards such goals.

Montenegro expresses its readiness to take all measures necessary to achieve close cooperation with its neighbours, with the countries of possible destination as well as with the countries of origin of refugees with a view to efficiently coping with and finding a sustainable answer to the problem of refugees and migrants. We strongly support the adoption of the global compacts on refugees and migrants. We express our readiness to fulfil our part of the obligations and, according to our capabilities, constructively contribute to international efforts to reaffirm the principles of the protection of refugees and migrants.

Co-Chair Thomson: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs of Malaysia.

Mr. Hamidi (Malaysia): Migration has become and continues to be one of the important security challenges faced by many countries in the form of irregular, illegal or mixed migration flows. Irregular or illegal migration involves cross-border flows of people who enter a country without the legal permission to do so, while mixed migration flows are complex population movements including both voluntary and forced migrants. The most common forms of irregular or illegal migration are related to illegal labour migration, labour trafficking and/or sexual exploitation, as well as those fleeing persecution, discrimination, natural disasters, poverty and armed conflicts.

In the early 1970s, Asian countries, including Malaysia, faced the exodus of Vietnamese boat people into our countries and, finally, they were successfully resettled in third countries with the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Nonetheless, to date, Malaysia is still hosting approximately 150,000 persons of concern, comprising asylum-seekers and refugees from 54 countries, though the term "refugee" has not been defined in any of our domestic legislation.

Despite not being a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol, Malaysia has always rendered humanitarian assistance to such cases without compromising on its sovereignty, integrity and security. However, I would like to take the opportunity to highlight the lingering problem pertaining to the resettlement of the existing refugee population in Malaysia to third countries, which in certain circumstances might take years to achieve. That would create adverse economic, social, political and security problems for the transit countries. In that regard, I would like to urge UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration and other State parties to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its related Protocol to give serious attention to the problem and act on it promptly, especially in providing financial assistance and other humanitarian assistance.

Another problem pertaining to the existing refugee population is the authenticity of the UNHCR card issued to them. I would like to suggest that UNHCR look into the registration and issuance of a UNHCR card embedded with additional security features. However, the determination of refugee status is solely at the discretion of UNHCR.

I would like to give my strong assurances that my country, Malaysia, will not neglect our international obligations and commitments in addressing conflict-induced migration caused by war, natural calamities and other factors. At the seventieth session of the General Assembly, our Prime Minister pledged that Malaysia would receive 3,000 Syrian migrants from the conflicts in Syria and Iraq over a period of three years (see A/70/PV. 22). I am pleased to state at today's plenary meeting that we have received them in two batches, and we look forward to receiving another batch of Syrian migrants

by the year's end. Previously, Malaysia hosted 350 migrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1997 to 2003 through a similar humanitarian commitment. It strongly reflects Malaysia's continuous devotion to this evolving issue.

Co-Chair Thomson: I now call on His Excellency Sheikh Sabah Khalid Al Hamad Al Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait.

Sheikh Al Sabah (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to extend our gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Peter Thomson, President of the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, and to the chairpersons of the working groups for their appreciable efforts in preparing for today's important meeting aimed at reaching an agreement on a political document that expresses the international community's awareness of the level of suffering of many people throughout the world. It entails working collectively to confront the challenges that imperil peace and security. The increase in the number of challenges we face today, as well as those faced by other countries suffering from a lack of food and medicine, compels us to meet all needs, since many people are now living outside of their homeland.

The total number of refugees stood at 244 million in 2015, which reflects a growth rate that is higher than the global population growth rate. We would like to emphasize the role to be undertaken by the United Nations to create innovative mechanisms and machinery to respond effectively to the crises besetting our countries, which have led to dangerous repercussions over the past decade. This has been the result of the increasing number of armed conflicts that endanger and kill hundreds of thousands of elderly persons, women and children. The international community has been unable to arrive at a unified and effective stance to curb and put an end to those crises and conflicts. We would like to emphasize the need to respect and apply international instruments and rules so as to arrive at political solutions that can save the lives of the innocent.

The Middle East is facing a very delicate and sensitive situation as the result of local infighting and in the light of the large migrations. Those conflicts have humanitarian, social, and cultural repercussions. That makes it necessary for us to strengthen our common action. The responsibility falls on the international community to ensure that such people do not get involved in terrorism and wars. The international community should press against incitement, xenophobia, and intolerance against refugees and migrants. Racial and religious prejudice should not be allowed to stand in the way of people achieving their aspirations to live in peace and security and to make a decent living.

We would like to emphasize the need to solve the problems of the refugees, particularly the Palestinian refugees, who have been suffering from injustice for around seven decades. We emphasize their need to return home, in accordance with resolution 194 (III), as well as the Arab Peace Initiative. We call on the international community to continue to extend assistance and support for refugees through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. We would like to ensure their protection in accordance with international humanitarian law.

The unanimous adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) represents an important step on the path of our collective humanitarian efforts. We wish to see a world with a great deal of hope and determination, and we hope to see that our meeting today will strengthen the joint international efforts to overcome the obstacles and risks that our world faces. We also emphasize that the United Nations should remain the most adequate venue for international multilateral action to achieve our purposes and fulfil our aspirations, and it continue to take steps to achieve international peace and security.

Co-Chair Thomson: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. María Ángela Holguín Cuéllar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

Ms. Cuellar (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): The issue of the large-scale movements of migrants and refugees across all continents requires common strategies to address the deep-rooted causes of those movements. Hundreds of thousands of people throughout the world leave their homes; some make the decision to leave and some are forced to do so. Without a doubt, the most important thing we can do is to protect human rights and act on the international promise to protect migrants. Unfortunately, there are also less supportive dimensions. There exists the dimension of organized crime, profiting from the expectations and plight of people who seek a life away from war, conflict, uncertainty and poverty.

That has particular relevance when we consider the movements of migrants in Latin America. Mass migration over recent years has led to unimaginable challenges for the countries of transit and destination. The countries of transit are not prepared, and they cannot establish permanent facilities because migrants are seeking destinations in the developed world. The international community, the United Nations and bodies providing assistance lack direction and are overwhelmed. There is humanitarian aid, but there is no consensus that can guide us in a timely fashion to put an end to conflict and keep people in their homes, provide them opportunities in their countries and prevent them from starting on such dangerous journeys.

We are all aware of the diagnosis, but we are unable to resolve the situation. Unequivocally, international cooperation is necessary. We also have to look for solutions that enable us to combat criminal organizations. This debate will enable us to come up with a necessary consensus and to take action. We have received the report of the Secretary-General on large-scale refugee and migrant movements (A/70/59). We have the annexes to the political Declaration (resolution 71/1), which propose a comprehensive response aimed at addressing the large movements of migrants by means of a global compact for safe, regular and orderly migration.

We have been called upon to meet the international commitments imposed on States and other international actors with a view to addressing the situation by guaranteeing human rights, safety and dignity. International cooperation and action are the tools whereby the international community can take concrete action to address situations of a humanitarian, social and economic nature in the countries of origin, transit and destination.

Now I want to talk about the work that Colombia has been developing together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Thanks to the autonomy of the IOM, we have been able to achieve real results in our efforts to help migrant populations. Thanks to that experience, Colombia hopes that the incorporation of the IOM into the United Nations will aid rather than limit efficient action.

We need a safe and transparent way of acting internationally, protecting the rights of all migrants, increasing their positive contributions to development, promoting multicultural exchanges and improving the public perception of migrants as vital contributors to our society. We have to meet the goal of facilitating regular, orderly and safe migration. That is vital if we are to do away with inequalities among countries and within countries. That is a task that is impossible to deal with unilaterally. We need coordinated actions and strategies. Colombia is therefore committed to adopting ambitious policies that offer a safe, prosperous future to migrant populations in the world.

Co-Chair Thomson: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Nasser Judeh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs of Jordan.

Mr. Judeh (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to extend my thanks to the former President of the General Assembly, Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, for his efforts in organizing this meeting, which is aimed at finding a better international response to the movements of refugees and migrants and which represents a turning point in our efforts to deal with international migration. I also wish to congratulate the new President of the General Assembly, Mr. Peter Thomson, for presiding over the Assembly at the current session, and I wish him success.

I also wish to thank the Special Adviser on Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, Ms. Karen AbuZayd, who prepared the report that is the basis for our discussion today (A/70/59). Along with Ireland, we had the honour of co-facilitating today's meeting. In that regard, Jordan welcomes the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) and looks forward to working in the framework of the United Nations humanitarian agencies and achieving the goals of the Declaration as 2018 approaches.

Jordan, with its small geographical area but with enormous generosity and patience, is second in the number of refugees that it takes in at the international level. It is one of the countries most involved in terms of the outcome of this meeting. We have opened our hearts and homes to those who have fled the horrors of wars and conflicts. We have safeguarded the human dignity of millions of the most vulnerable, particularly women and children, at a time when the world is witnessing the most odious forms of the abuse of human dignity. Despite all the conflicts and their repercussions in the Middle East, Jordan has been a safe haven for many waves of migration.

This first summit meeting convened by the General Assembly on migration and refugees should make

it possible for us to find a solution to the oldest and most complicated refugee question, which is that of the Palestinian refugees. We must ensure the inalienable rights of the Palestinian refugees to return to their country in accordance with international law and within the framework of a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian question. That conflict is the longest-lasting crisis in relation to threats to peace. It is necessary to find an opportunity to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is a major issue. The Palestinian question is at the core of a number of conflicts in the region. It has engendered the spread of extremism and has led to insecurity in our region.

Jordan, under the leadership of King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, continues to welcome the largest number of refugees. We also protect the legitimate rights of Palestinian refugees, and we will redouble our efforts to do so. As a host country, we have a responsibility. The international community must also shoulder its responsibility in that regard and help us find permanent solutions with regard to the Palestinian question. We underscore the fact that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East must be able to carry out its work. We must therefore eliminate the deficit in the Agency's budget, so that it can provide services to the Palestinian refugees in Jordan and in all other areas under the Agency's purview, ensuring the dignity and rights of the Palestinian people.

Over the past few years, Jordan has welcomed more than 1.3 million Syrian refugees, a number equal to 20 per cent of our population. We have cooperated with the United Nations in building camps that have been able to accommodate only 10 per cent of those Syrian refugees, while many of them have been lodged throughout our villages and cities. We have opened schools and hospitals. We have assumed our responsibilities in providing protection, work and opportunities to Syrian and Palestinian refugees.

We have provided our Syrian brothers with services despite our difficult economic situation, while other countries that surpass us substantially in size or economic resources have not been up to the task to welcome even a handful of those refugees. Given the negligible amount of aid coming from the international community, our ability to continue providing services to refugees and our citizens has been diminished.

The Government of Jordan has developed a novel programme that enables the establishment of links between the international humanitarian need and the crisis in Syria. Its implementation will extend from 2016 to 2018, and, in that context, we will work closely with the United Nations and the international community. At the latest London Conference on Syria, Jordan and its partners adopted a comprehensive agreement that is part of a follow-up on the part of international and regional partners.

The Syrian migration crisis is not limited to Syria's neighbouring countries. It is a crisis of international proportions. We welcome the support afforded us by the international community. However, it allows us to respond to only 35 per cent of the exhausting costs associated with hosting refugees. We reiterate that we must find a political rather than a solely humanitarian solution to the conflict, which is now in its seventh year. The time has come for the international community to shoulder its responsibilities and help Jordan ensure the safety and security of the region as well as that of the world.

That is the goal of our summit meeting today, and Jordan must be supported in fulfilling its responsibilities with regard to the refugees. We are assuming those responsibilities on behalf of the international community in general. In urgent and crisis situations, the international community must support the founding members of the international community, irrespective of the size or importance of the State. It is a major responsibility that we are assuming on the part of the international community. Jordan will continue to redouble its efforts at the international level to confront the international migration problem, in particular as regards Syria.

Mr. Sogavare (Solomon Islands), Acting Co-Chair, took the Chair.

Our King will participate in the leaders' conference with the Secretary-General and the leaders of Sweden and the United States, among others. We hope that we will be able to reach an effective outcome that will make it possible for us to reduce the suffering of the refugees and the difficulties faced by host countries. The lack of a political solution will lead to a stronger feeling of frustration and injustice, in particular among youth. That will only encourage extremist tendencies.

The unprecedented number of refugees, displaced persons and migrants is a disgrace for the international

community. The stakes of this global crisis are of unprecedented size and proportions. We must collectively face the crisis by working along two equally important tracks. The first is based on solidarity and maintaining protection, as well as sharing the costs of hosting refugees, with a provision for flexible assistance that will expedite their resettlement in third countries.

The second track focuses on several matters. They include working on the primary root causes that have led to refugee status, which have long been mainly political issues; we need to abide by the purposes and principles of the United Nations, thereby ending occupation and enforcing resolutions with international legitimacy, and to respect international human rights instruments and conventions. We need to respect the international will to achieve long-term solutions so as to ensure the return of refugees to their homeland to enjoy stability, peace and security.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Prosper Bani, Minister of the Interior of Ghana.

Mr. Bani (Ghana): I am grateful for this opportunity to make a statement here on the position of Ghana as it relates to large movements of refugees and migrants. This high-level summit meeting is very timely, and we would like to thank the Secretary-General for enabling the international community to come together to design a blueprint for a better response to tackling the issues and challenges posed by this hydra-headed phenomenon.

Ghana's contributions to finding long-lasting solutions in that context are aimed at enhancing thinking and leadership in tackling refugee-induced displacements and harnessing the benefits of migration for development, based on experiential lessons. As the members of the Assembly may recall, quite recently my country experienced influxes of asylum-seekers from the West African subregion as a result of generalized violence, and it is now host to more than 21,300 refugees and asylum-seekers from 26 countries across the globe, residing in four camps and in urban areas.

The pattern of migration in Ghana involves internal migration, immigration and emigration, with a predominant characteristic of rural-to-urban migration, owing mainly to spatial inequalities. At the moment, Ghanaians are found residing in 33 countries, with an estimated net emigrant population varying between 250,000 to 1.5 million. Ghana has joined other countries in the search for ways to increase international cooperation to achieve better responses, based on the understanding that forced displacement is both a humanitarian and a development issue.

That has led to the development of the job-solution approach strategy, which seeks to encourage the utilization of available skills within the refugee and host communities with innovative business practices to maximize productivity for sustainable incomes and livelihood opportunities; encourage the participation of the refugees in the host community and local governance arrangements, so as to increase and deepen trust and ensure prolonged, amicable relations and coexistence; and ensure arrangements aimed at improving the quality of services targeting the most vulnerable among the refugees and the host communities.

The key policy goal of the national migration policy, which was recently promulgated, is to promote the benefits and minimize the costs of internal and international migration through legal means, with the rights and security of migrants well respected in order to ensure economic development in Ghana. The national migration policy establishes mutually reinforcing objectives, including addressing human rights issues, ensuring safe passages, and fighting racism and xenophobic tendencies, as well as guaranteeing the rights of Ghanaians to migrate.

Regardless of such rights, the strains of hosting refugees prevail. They include the increasingly protracted nature of displacements and the mounting complexity of the challenges facing host countries; dwindling global resources, assistance and related support services; the insufficiency of short-term interventions and the corresponding elusiveness of the desired results; the compelling need for long-term national and collective horizons to ensure more effective and sustained intervening impact; and the persistence of the triggers and challenges that induce the phenomenon.

Although most immigration currently occurs through safe and appropriate channels, it still remains dangerous for many would-be migrants. Ghana's participation in this high-level summit will therefore serve to reiterate the Secretary-General's call for shared responsibility geared towards lessening the burden of the mounting complexity of hosting challenges and governance arrangements for ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights and the safety of migrants, regardless of their migration status, as well as harnessing

the benefits of migration. Shared responsibility and robust governance regimes at the local, regional and global levels will be major linchpins of solid responses to address large movements of refugees and migrants. Displacements have national, regional and global dimensions, and long-lasting solutions envisaged under the ambit of this summit will be possible only with concerted and coordinated efforts across the various spectrums of international interactions.

The Acting Co-Chair: The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Rami Hamdallah, Prime Minister of the State of Palestine.

Mr. Hamdallah (Palestine) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am honoured and humbled to join the Assembly today, during this important United Nations high-level meeting on large movements of refugees and migrants, as the representative of the Palestinian people, a people whose majority population is composed of refugees, constituting nearly a quarter of the world's refugee population, more than 40 per cent of the globe's long-term refugees, and the most protracted refugee crisis in contemporary history.

I convey the full support of our President, Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, for this important summit meeting on refugees and migrants, as well as support for their legitimate rights, especially the right to return, which is guaranteed under all international traditions and laws.

I carry with me the voices of our millions of refugees — more than 5.3 million men, women and children registered by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) — from refugee camps dispersed in our region in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and in occupied Palestine, including in occupied East Jerusalem, along with millions more from the diaspora in the Middle East region, Latin America, Europe, North America and beyond, where many of our refugees migrated in search of more stable and prosperous lives.

I carry their stories of loss and tragedy, displacement and exile, suffering and indignity, since the onset of their plight in the 1948 Al-Nakba, when most of our people were forcibly uprooted and driven out of their homes and ancestral lands, or fled for their lives during the Assembly's partition of Mandate Palestine and the establishment of Israel, including on the ruins of their homes and villages.

In the long years thereafter, they have continued to be unjustly denied their rights, including to return to live at peace and to compensation for their losses, forcing generation after generation to endure great hardships, deprivation and marginalization, repeated displacement and violent crises.

Yet I also carry with me a message of hope from Palestinian refugees. They, who have endured so many upheavals and misfortunes, remain resilient, committed to their dreams and legitimate aspirations, and hold firm to a conviction in humanity, in international law and in the arc of history and justice that will restore their rights and bestow upon them the dignity and peace that they have for so long been denied. They share the spirit of hope and resilience with their refugee and migrant sisters and brothers around the world, including and especially in our troubled region, standing in solidarity with them in this moment of need, offering solace and support as they all seek and await just, peaceful solutions to their plights.

We must work politically and legally to end the crisis. It is our moral duty to translate into action the statements made here in this Hall to remedy the plight of the world's millions of refugees and migrants and provide them with the humanitarian assistance they need to live safe, dignified and productive lives. At the same time, we should spare no effort to ensure that their rights are upheld, respected and restored, in accordance with international law, including human rights law, humanitarian law and refugee law, as applicable, and to address the root causes of their plight.

Based on this abiding obligation, the General Assembly has rightly persisted in its calls and efforts for a just solution to the plight of the Palestine refugees, including the right to return, in accordance with resolution 194 (III), and it has rightly supported the mandate of UNRWA for more than 65 years, ensuring the provision of vital humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian refugees, as well as to the Palestinians displaced in June 1967 and subsequent hostilities who are in need.

UNRWA is an example of how to find humane solutions to today's crises of refugees, displaced persons and migrants by fulfilling basic needs while also building human capital and self-reliance and insisting that no one be left behind in our collective pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

For us Palestinians, UNRWA has meant more than aid; it has been a lifeline, sustaining our refugees in the darkest of times, as witnessed in recent years, whether with the catastrophic conflict in Syria, with its massive spillover into Lebanon and Jordan, or in occupied Palestine, where the brutality and indignities inflicted by the Israeli occupation and the inhumane Israeli blockade have had a grave impact on refugee communities. As we grapple with the root causes of the current large movements of people, we must not ignore the fact that, for the first time in decades, Palestine refugees have been compelled to leave the region, including on perilous journeys across the sea, fleeing the ravages of war and poverty. This is a universal hope and desire that we see in the movements of refugees and migrants in our world today.

Of course, the presence of UNRWA for more than 65 years is also testament to the far-reaching consequences of the failure to secure just and lasting solutions. It underscores the need for a reinforced commitment by the international community to engage proactively in conflict resolution and prevention, in conformity with international law, and to tackle the root causes of forced and protracted displacement.

On this occasion, we renew our appreciation to UNRWA and its staff. We also commend the 30,000 national staff of UNRWA, Palestine refugees themselves, who have been serving their brethren as humanitarians, teachers, doctors, nurses, specialists, administrators, counselors, therapists, emergency workers and more. They are a testament to the fact that refugees are not necessarily a burden, but rather can be agents for good in the societies and countries hosting them, pending the achievement of just solutions, and also a testament to the power of education, a fundamental right and necessity for all refugees and migrants.

In that context, we also commend the ongoing support provided by the Kingdom of Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic to Palestinian refugees, and express our abiding gratitude for their support to the large Palestine refugee communities that they have hosted for nearly seven decades, and for their facilitation of UNRWA's mission and ongoing cooperation.

We also thank all donor countries and organizations from around the world, large and small, for their generous support to UNRWA over the long years, ensuring the continuity and quality of the Agency's programmes. We urge donors to continue to provide sustained and predictable support that is commensurate with growing refugee needs and remedies critical funding gaps to allow the Agency to fulfil its humanitarian mission.

We stress the importance of such principled international support, in line with abiding political responsibilities and humanitarian obligations, and appeal for continued solidarity with the Palestine refugees and the Palestinian people as a whole, pending the achievement of a just, comprehensive, peaceful and lasting solution to the question of Palestine in all its aspects. We are convinced that achieving the rights and freedom of our people is a political, security, humanitarian and moral imperative for our region and our world that must be urgently pursued.

The State of Palestine supports the commitments made in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants adopted at this meeting (resolution 71/1) as well as the commitments set out in the comprehensive refugee response framework. We highlight in this regard the urgent need to achieve a just solution to the plight of the Palestinian refugees that guarantees their right to return in accordance with resolution 194 (III).

We also support the global compact on responsibility-sharing for refugees (see A/70/59). We are proud to have been among the initial States to join the Group of Friends of Migration and reaffirms its solidarity here today.

In conclusion, we will pursue our cooperation with all international partners in seeking just, peaceful and lasting solutions to the injustices and challenges we all face, including a solution to the plight of the Palestine refugees, which remains among the highest priorities for the Palestinian leadership. In closing, we also stress our empathy and solidarity with all refugees and migrants in all four corners of the world, and our hopes for fulfilment of their rights for a better, safer and more dignified future for themselves, their children, their countries and our global family.

The Acting Co-Chair: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Paolo Gentiloni, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Italy.

Mr. Gentiloni (Italy): I am really proud to be here today bearing witness to the great humanity of the Italian people in hosting those who land every day on our shores. For years, Italy has faced a migration crisis in the Mediterranean region, and we have managed

thanks to the commitment and generosity of the women and men of Lampedusa, the Italian Coast Guard and the thousands of volunteers who have devoted their time to helping migrants and refugees after their perilous journeys across the Mediterranean. I would like to express my gratitude to all those people here before everyone.

Italy has long called for the involvement of the whole international community in managing the migratory phenomenon. I am therefore particularly pleased to see that, thanks to the sensitivity and vision of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Filippo Grandi, the principle of shared responsibility has been welcomed now by all States Members of the United Nations.

After all, what we are trying to do is not simply to resolve an emergency or crisis. We are working for durable solutions to a situation that will affect generations to come. On the one hand, we are all aware of our international obligations regarding the protection of refugees. Such protection is owed to those fleeing war and persecution. In my opinion, that protection should be expanded to cover new categories of refugees, such as those fleeing disasters caused by climate change.

On the other hand, even those seeking a better life, fleeing poverty and the lack of a future, have the right to an answer from us. They have the right to hope. They should be able to hope that a better life is attainable in their own countries and their own homes. In that spirit, through our proposal of a compact on migration to our European Union partners, Italy has been promoting a plan to develop a true partnership with African countries of origin. We have to invest in Africa to tackle the root causes of migration, which are primarily economic and demographic inequalities. But most of all, we should invest in Africa, because that means that we are investing in our own future.

We all know, however, that such a commitment will produce results only in the long term. Meanwhile, we must provide a humanitarian response; we must save lives. For that, I am asking for solidarity and the full commitment of the entire international community. With its search-and-rescue operations, Italy has been at the forefront of the migration crisis in the Mediterranean for years. Last year, Italian units saved more than 75,000 people; so far this year, they have saved more than 60,000. Those are impressive numbers, but even more impressive and more moving are the tales of pain and suffering behind those numbers.

We have to respond to that emergency right now. That is why, thanks once again to the support of civil society, Italy has been promoting a resettlement programme, the Humanitarian Corridors project, aimed at saving the most vulnerable among migrantsat least — I am thinking particularly of women and unaccompanied children. We should be able to ensure that they do not have to embark on a dangerous journey in the hands of smugglers across the desert or the sea. Our hope is that the Humanitarian Corridors project can be adopted as a best practice by other countries.

By all means, let us protect refugees, but let us also give hope to those who have lost it, to the weakest among migrants, such as children and women travelling alone. Let us give them hope, and in doing so we can also give our own society a hope and a vision. By protecting the most vulnerable we are protecting our own values. By saving children's lives we are saving our own future. Let us invest in our future. Let us reject the idea that the only prospect today for some young women and small children is reliance on smugglers.

We must come up with an immediate response to those in need of protection and with practical solutions for the most vulnerable migrants. That is Italy's commitment here today. I appeal to everyone here to help to provide protection for vulnerable migrants as well as refugees. We will raise the issue next year with our partners during Italy's presidency of the Group of Seven. We must not let a child fleeing Aleppo find his death on a Mediterranean shore.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.